

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Pushing drivers to the limit



by John Marcotte

Here's what my terminal manager thinks is a normal night's work: you load trucks for eight hours, handling heavy floor freight, then you take a truck out over the road. And you do that again the next night, and the next.

This is because of this "combination" classification garbage my company started. Instead of having drivers and dockmen, most jobs are "combination" where you're doing both jobs. This puts senior dockmen out of work. Non-union CCX (Conway Central Express), one of the Consolidated Freight's—CF's—non-union "double-breasting" operations, runs that way. They make the drivers load their truck, take it out and unload it.

And it was driver fatigue that caused the crash a few months ago, in Pennsylvania I think, where a CCX driver fell asleep and collided head-on with a Roadway truck, killing both drivers. I have read in the paper that the government's own studies show most accidents involving heavy trucks are caused by driver fatigue.

My terminal manager uses a driver as a casual, who he knows has a full-time day job, to run loads to Pennsylvania and Massachusetts at night. He'll bring this guy in four or five nights in a row. By the second night this guy looks like walking hell. He can hardly stand up, and they give him 65,000 pounds of truck to take on the highway where you and your family are driving!

My terminal manager loves anyone who will work any hours, break any rules, act like there's no union and come back for more. He tells us, "The problem is you Teamsters make too much," meaning we make some overtime and we might "book off" (take off) Friday or Monday.

He's got a big stack of applications from drivers look-

(continued on page 3)

Black World

Haiti in the crucible of imperialism



by Lou Turner

The Clinton Administration has played the same order-mongering role in Haiti in the year since its invasion and return to President Jean-Bertrand Aristide that it now plays in the Bosnia crisis. That is to say, the "humanitarian" goal of U.S. intervention to halt the slaughter by paramilitary and regular military forces of civilian populations quickly becomes the strategic goal of freezing the status quo. Neo-fascist forces are legitimized as the "loyal opposition" to counterbalance the democratic forces that the U.S. fears will seek their own self-determination independent of the imperialist dictates of Washington.

So runs the logic of this new pax Americana; so it is in Haiti. Allan Nairn's reports for *The Nation* (10-24-94; 1-8/15-96) on the U.S.'s foreign policy to destabilize the democratic forces in Haiti in order to safeguard the dominance of Haiti's elite exposed a U.S. imperialism every bit as savagely counter-revolutionary as during its Cold War heyday. Not only was the CIA involved in the September 1991 coup against Aristide, and the subsequent campaign of disinformation against him while he was in exile, but it set up and financed the paramilitary FRAPH to terrorize and liquidate Aristide's supporters.

The latest scandal involves the demand by Haitian officials for the return of thousands of pages of documents seized by U.S. troops in the 1994 invasion which the officials say would help them prosecute human rights abuse by the deposed military junta. The clear implication behind the U.S. refusal to hand over the documents of the former regime is that they incriminate U.S. imperialism in atrocities against the Haitian people.

But if Haiti is made to undergo more political abuse at the hands of its U.S. "benefactors," it is because Haiti's dirt-poor economy is being channelized into the imperialist designs of international donor agencies and off-shore multinational corporations whose vampire-like gaze only sees Haiti as a source of cheap exploitable labor.

The neocolonial profile of U.S.-Haitian relations is the outline of its "democratic" future. Even as the IMF and World Bank clamor for the privatization of state-run in-

(continued on page 8)

Clinton-Congress showdown exposes ailing state of union

by Jim Mills

The day after Bill Clinton's State of the Union address Jan. 23, the *Chicago Sun-Times* summed up his message in a headline: "Clinton fakes left, goes right." Republicans watched stone-faced as Clinton ran away with a theme contrary to Democratic policy, until now: "The era of big government is over."

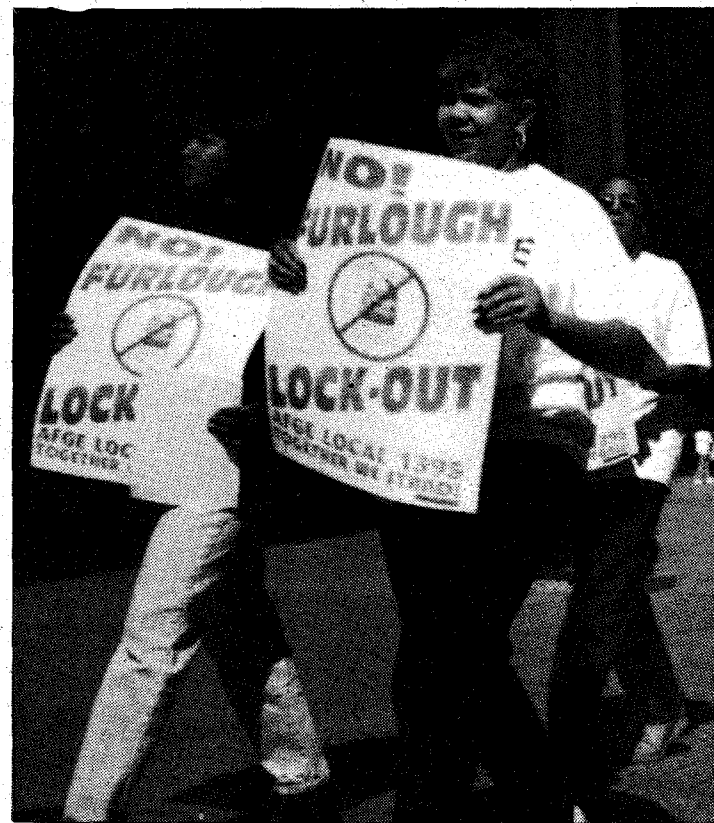
Newt Gingrich and the first-term representatives, deceitfully called "revolutionaries," fought hard to put their own name on dismantling the social support systems born out of the two great eras of struggle in this century, the 1930s and the 1960s.

However the State of the Union all but admitted that the White House has done its part to either kill programs that meet human needs or yield to Republican efforts to do so. Since taking office, Clinton's "Republican" causes have included "Ending welfare as we know it," rewriting labor law, curtailing worker protections, privatizing health care, vitiating affirmative action.

As last year's budget negotiations opened, he consented to fundamental cuts in all social programs. Reductions in "means test" programs (if you're poor enough, you qualify) were six times larger than those of the Reagan administration until "compromises" lowered that proportion to a little over four times.

Clinton maintained the appearance in the ensuing debate that he was defending health care benefits for the poor and elderly against a Republican tax cut for the rich. At the same time, however, he had agreed to accept the seven-year deadline for a balanced budget and to employ Congress's trickle-down economic assumptions.

Taken altogether, Clinton's concessions exposed something of a confidence game being played by the two major parties: Both White House and Congress have agreed to end the so-called welfare state. Moreover, balancing the budget serves as the means to annul what modicum of spending was left over after Reaganomics built up an unassailable \$5 trillion national debt, the interest on which has devoured vast amounts of every budget since.



Federal workers in Chicago protest shutdown.

Furthermore, the part of the budget covering defense, social security, and interest on the national debt was removed from the negotiating table at the start. Out of the remaining one quarter of the budget—dealing with health, work, and children among other needs—are supposed to come all cuts.

SHUTDOWNS HURT

The rightward confluence of the Clinton administration with Gingrich's "Contract With America" made the

(continued on page 9)

French strikes challenge retrogression

by Kevin Anderson

"Solidarite." Solidarity. The historic labor slogan sounds sentimental or even archaic to many amid today's corporate takeovers, massive layoffs, and austerity economics. Yet no other word explains better the recent events in France.

On December 13, after three weeks of millions-strong strikes and demonstrations had paralyzed the country, forcing millions to walk because of a lack of transport, the *staid New York Times* wrote that the workers' actions had "created a baffling sympathy among the public at large, despite the considerable discomfort the strikes have caused." It was the conservative Prime Minister, Alain Juppe, not the workers, who backed down, withdrawing most of his austerity plan. As we go to press, a follow-up round of labor demonstrations has been announced for early February.

It began on Saturday, November 24, when several hundred thousand railway workers demonstrated against Juppe's economic plan. That plan would have forced workers on the state railroads and other public employees to work longer before receiving full pensions, increased paycheck deductions for benefits, cut the number of railroad lines by nearly 20%, and raised the income tax on working people.

In the next few days, subway and bus workers joined the "cheminots," the railway workers. They then fanned out and convinced postal, electric power, and airport workers to join in. By the following week, university students, who had already been fighting budget cuts, came aboard, while truck drivers now began blocking highways outside several large cities.

At this point, the leadership of one of the big union federations, the pro-Socialist Party CFDT, broke ranks, tacitly supporting the government. This had little effect, however. The strikes continued to grow. Workers began to shut down the major seaports as well. On Tuesday, December 12, the outpouring on the streets reached 1.7 million according to the *New York Times*. Some smaller cities had almost as large a turnout as Paris. By this time, the powerful teachers unions had also joined the strike.

The next day, Juppe offered major concessions. Without waiting for the planned December 16 demonstrations, the CGT suddenly ordered its railway workers back to work. Trains and subways began to roll in Paris. Still, on December 16, there were hundreds of thousands on the streets, including 150,000 in Marseilles, more than in Paris. In a few places, such as Caen and Marseilles, the struggle continued a bit longer. In Marseilles, the transit workers held out until January 9. They had an additional demand, scrapping the two-tier wage and benefit system put in place a few years ago for new employees. They won, forcing an end to the two-tier system in Marseilles transit.

During these events, much of the bourgeois press, the politicians, and some intellectuals such as philosopher Bernard-Henri Levy or the editors of the leftist journal *Esprit*, acted as if all of this was a narrow, corporatist struggle by a "privileged" group of railway workers. Others such as sociologist Pierre Bourdieu spoke at public meetings of strikers to express their solidarity. Bourdieu and nearly 500 other leftist intellectuals, including Samir Amin, Pierre Broue, Regis Debray, Christine Delphy, Jacques Derrida, Pierre Lantz, Michael Lowy, and Pierre Vidal-Naquet then signed a December 4 "Appeal by Intellectuals in Support of the Strikers."

Youth immediately saw their own struggles for education and jobs as connected to those of labor. In Toulouse on December 12, thousands of students joined workers at the morning demonstration of 120,000, then held one in the afternoon around their own demands for more funding for education.

The same was true of the feminist movement. Accord-

(continued on page 12)

ON THE INSIDE

From Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya •
Montgomery Bus Boycott and American roots of Marxism page 4
Editorial • Bosnia partitioned..... page 5
Essay • Bosnia's struggle page 5

Feminism, Hegel, and political crises today

by Laurie Cashdan

Many radical feminist theorists characterize the 1990s as a crisis for feminist thought. Italian feminist Rosi Braidotti, for example, attacks the abstract, apolitical relativism about "differences" which has emerged among a plethora of radical writers.

"Difference," in the age of the disintegration of the Eastern block, is a dangerous term. As several feminist Yugoslav philosophers put it: when 'difference' is used negatively and divisively, a postmodernist attempt to redefine it positively becomes desperate and vain. Fragmentation and the reappraisal of difference in a post-structuralist mode can only be perceived at best ironically, and at worst tragically, by somebody living in Zagreb, not to speak of Dubrovnik and Sarajevo."¹

"Where can [a] new theoretical and political creativity be founded?" Braidotti demands (p. 3). She asks why "has the intellectual left...been historically defeated in favor of whatever brand of neopositivism or lukewarm neoliberalism we are going through today."

However, attempts by feminist theorists to answer the question, "where can a new theoretical and political creativity be founded," have not necessarily issued a new clarion call for revolution—at least not the kind of revolution Marx called "revolution in permanence."

I found helpful in thinking through these challenges Tina Chanter's new work *Ethics of Eros: Irigaray's Rewriting of the Philosophers* (Routledge, 1995), a philosophical account of the French feminist Luce Irigaray's

Woman as Reason

concept of sexual difference as a positive, urgently needed dimension of society. Here I concentrate on Chanter's chapters on Hegel and Irigaray.

Chanter argues that feminist ideals of equality with man are woefully inadequate in the 1990s. Her main concern is that attempts to work out sexual differences of women as a positive dimension for politics have been thwarted by fears that such questions rely on women's supposedly inherent qualities. She argues that the radical potential of Irigaray's work becomes clear as seen in light of its philosophic underpinnings in Hegel, de Beauvoir, Heidegger, Derrida and Levinas.

Especially significant is her critique of Simone de Beauvoir's concept of woman as Other in *The Second Sex*, based on Hegel's chapter in *The Phenomenology of Mind* on "Lordship and Bondage," on the "master/slave dialectic." Chanter argues that de Beauvoir's woman starts as dependent on man and never rejects this dependency, remaining in a static duality in which the man is always transcendent and pursues his own freedom while the woman remains dependent.

For Hegel, Chanter writes, there is a reversal in the slave's self-consciousness. After undergoing a life-and-death struggle in which the slave confronts death, he or she has no illusions about freedom—unlike the master who thinks he's free but whose "freedom" is based on dependency on the slave. The slave then gains a sense of independence, a "mind of one's own," through labor.

Clearly frustrated at de Beauvoir's misinterpretation of Hegel's dialectic, and bothered by her failure to explore what might result from looking at women in this light, Chanter exclaims, "What would happen if women, rather than aspiring to the same values as men, took seriously what it means to be women?" (p. 74) Impatiently criticizing those feminists who write off Hegel, she insists, "Precisely because Hegel's confrontation with the tradition of philosophy was so dazzlingly comprehensive because he took the history of philosophy so seriously, we can learn from re-reading Hegel" (p. 122). And taking seriously what it means to be women is what she thinks Irigaray contributes.

However, what Irigaray means by women's sexual difference—"what it means to be women"—veers away from Hegelian dialectics. Indeed, Hegel's warning about stopping at independence or "a mind of one's own" seems prescient. Hegel argues that for freedom to get beyond the attitude of bondage, it must first confront objective reality. Otherwise, a mind of one's own remains "a piece of cleverness which has mastery within a certain range, but not over the universal power nor over the entire objective reality."

This problem emerges most sharply as Chanter follows out Irigaray's confrontation with Hegel's writing on Antigone in his *Phenomenology of Mind*. Chanter analyzes the cultural presuppositions about sex that underlie Hegel's discussion. She argues that Hegel so immerses Antigone in Nature and Family that she never achieves full ethical consciousness or Reason, although her chal-

lenge to Creon, because of his refusal to accord her brother a proper burial, leads to Antigone's own death and ultimately the demise of the state.

For Chanter, Irigaray's analysis illuminates nothing more than the need to "reconceptualize the civic sphere, so that the supposedly neutral (but in fact masculine-biased) social and political rights and duties that have traditionally defined this sphere, are specified further, in terms of rights and duties pertaining to sexual difference" (p. 125). Anything less results in women merely demanding rights accorded to men without developing the radical potential of women's historical difference.

Yet the new ethics elaborated by Irigaray in *Thinking the Difference: For a Peaceful Revolution* (Routledge, 1994) doesn't sound terribly new when it poses a feminist ethics based on the mother-daughter relation against patriarchal war-like values destroying society. In Irigaray's "peaceful revolution," neither the "permanent critique" of woman as Other within metaphysics, nor its abstract ethics of female values, connect to actual women in the historic dialectics of revolution.

Irigaray poses the positive of women by focusing on "multiplicity, difference, and otherness." This returns us back to Braidotti's concern with theories of difference that succumb to neopositivism or neoliberalism. To master a new concept of sex/gender while uncoupling it from the revolutionary dialectics of freedom that inheres within Hegel's dialectic, including in his discussion of Antigone, leaves us again facing a crisis within feminism.

1. Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (Columbia University, 1994), p. 146.

REMEMBER ROSA LUXEMBURG!

Berlin, Germany - Over 75,000 people marched Jan. 14 in honor of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, both murdered 77 years ago by the Freikorps, the precursor to the Nazis.

It is the need to throw one's whole life on the scales of destiny; it's this passion for revolution; it's the urgency to get out of prison confinement and open entirely new vistas; in a word, it's the need for what Luxemburg called 'staying human,' that characterized the whole of her vision for a new society."



Rosa Luxemburg, self-portrait

— Raya Dunayevskaya from *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*
To order, see ad on page 7.

'Surface Tension': A review

I read *Surface Tension: Love, Sex, and Politics Between Lesbians and Straight Women* (1996), edited by Meg Daley, hoping to find writings which, in crossing the boundaries between lesbian and straight, create a new kind of unity among women of all sexual identities. Feminists have been divided along the lines of sexuality since the movement began, creating a gulf which not only hurts our aims of unity and freedom, but limits our views and choices regarding our own sexuality.

Ann Powers of the *Village Voice*, raises Adrienne Rich's idea of a "lesbian continuum" to show how strict views of sexuality have limited potential for new kinds of relations among women: "Through a litany of examples ranging from adolescent girl-crushes to older women's domestic companionship, we can see, in Rich's words, 'breaths of female history and psychology that have lain out of reach as a consequence of limited, mostly clinical, definitions of 'lesbianism.'"

Louise Rafkin, a lesbian, embraces a similar attitude: "[T]he delineation between straight and gay seems most bizarre; a harsh labeling that sorts us in ways that we shouldn't or perhaps needn't always be divided."

Meg Daley, the editor, concludes that "identity politics" of any kind are limiting. The writers in this collection "have written beyond boundaries of sexual orientation to further our understanding of women's intimate bonds."

Daphne Merkin, while defending her reasons for rejecting lesbianism, including offensive descriptions of lesbian sex, admits she is "contaminated by a cultural outlook that casts my own kind as somehow deficient or lesser than." Her final question, "have I chosen heterosexuality, with its impossible anxieties, or has it chosen me?" raises points of connection between sexism, heterosexism and sexual choices. If our sexuality is conditioned by society, is it possible to condition our sexuality to suit our own needs rather than those of society?

I was disappointed to find Dorothy Allison, author of *Bastard Out of Carolina* (a book I loved for bringing sex and class together so creatively), projecting a limited definition of lesbianism. Writing with disdain of "political lesbians" who choose same sex relationships for philosophical reasons, Allison contends that "Real lesbians are not theoretical constructs. We have our own history,

Delta union drive

Itta Bena, Miss.—Workers at American Catfish are trying to organize their plant again. Over 50 workers have already signed union cards, and we have a rank-and-file plant committee set up to help run the campaign. There is a lot of spirit because the workers are angry over what happened to them in the last year.

Last year "American Cat" workers had a drive to sign up members in our local, UFCW Local 1529, and went all the way to holding a representation election, but they lost. I thought we were going to win last time, but in the last two weeks workers got scared and listened to promises from the owner, Solem Scott. Scott told them that if they voted against the union, he would give everyone a 50¢ an hour raise. And he made lots of other promises too. But he didn't keep any of them; there was no raise and the conditions in the plant are worse than ever. Solem's father owns Scott Petroleum, so you know there is no shortage of money in that family.

Soon after the union was voted down, American Cat began hiring. Now their work force is up to about 240 workers, nearly all Black women. They are the last major non-union catfish plant in the Delta, and it's time they were organized.

One worker said: "I hope people learned from what happened last time. Management here will lie to you, cheat you, steal from you. They can promise you anything and give you nothing. To get anything, we will have to fight for it." —Local 1529 volunteer organizer

Clemency for Garcia

Chicago—Death row prisoner Guinevere Garcia, 37, was granted clemency by Gov. Jim Edgar on Jan. 16. Her sentence for the 1991 murder of her husband was commuted to life in prison without parole. He said the facts of her case did not fit the sentence, but that she should stay in prison. Garcia had resisted efforts by advocates for battered women and death penalty opponents to save her life and had waived her rights to appeal, saying she would rather die than spend life in prison.

Garcia had suffered a life of violence, sexual abuse and genital mutilation. Raped by an uncle at age 6 and gang-raped by neighborhood boys at 15, she began a life of alcoholism and prostitution while still a teenager. At 18 she smothered her infant daughter, fearing the child would be placed in the care of the uncle who had raped her and grandparents who had physically abused her.

After serving ten years for the crime, she remarried her second husband, George Garcia, a man who had already beaten and mutilated her, but left him after two weeks. During an argument in July 1991, he slammed her head into a car's dashboard until she shot him with a gun she carried that day because she was afraid of him.

Women are rarely given the death penalty in the U.S. Yet of the 47 women on Death Row today, about 20% are there for killing their spouses, as opposed to 2% of men there for the same offense. This indicates a bias against women who go against society's expectations and defend themselves. For battered women like Garcia, a life of abuse has left them ashamed and guilt-ridden. Garcia's choice to accept her fate was typical of women who have lived with continued violence. But Guinevere Garcia is still in prison. Her only chance for release is through another clemency petition.

—Sharon M.

Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

A coalition of 21 feminist groups in Spain is demanding the expulsion from both their offices and their parties of all politicians who beat their wives—including two already convicted of that crime. "We've known for years that certain politicians beat their spouses, but the will to end abuse just doesn't exist," said one feminist.

Twenty-two women immigrants from China—some survivors of the New York shipwreck in 1993—went on hunger strike in December in a California jail. They were protesting more than two years of detention and government threats to deport them. Ten of the women are seeking political asylum because of China's forced abortions, sterilizations and family planning laws.

our own issues and agendas, and complicated sex lives, completely separate from heterosexuality....I do not believe that identity is conceptual." [Emphasis mine.]

By creating a definition for "real" lesbians based solely on instinctual libido and lust, Allison bars a range of possibilities for relations among women. Cannot "political lesbianism" be one way for women to experience new relations with each other? What gives one lesbian the right to define what drives a "real" lesbian? Our desires as women aren't so simple.

Surprisingly, of the 29 feminist authors in this book, none mentions the need to transcend capitalism or patriarchy. This book, however filled with poignant prose and timely debate, leaves me with the question: we need to be united, yes, but toward what aim?

—Julia Jones

Vigil condemns lynchings

San Francisco—Protesting the murders of two lesbians in Oregon and a Black couple in North Carolina, over 100 people held a candlelight vigil in the Castro district on Dec. 13. This group saw a connection and linked them to the growing incidence of hate crimes in the U.S.

The murdered lesbians, Roxanne Ellis and Michelle Abdill, were domestic partners and well-known political activists in their home near Ashland, Ore. A friend of the women at the rally said they knew the risks of being out in an isolated town, "but they fought to be a model for all queers living in small towns."

The Black couple murdered near Fort Bragg, Michael James and Jackie Burden, were two innocent people walking down the street at the wrong place and time. Three white soldiers shot the couple as part of an initiation rite for their racist army gang. To receive a spider web tattoo on their necks, the soldiers had to kill a Black or gay person.

One speaker at the rally told the protesters that 72% of hate crimes are committed against people of color and 18% are committed against queers. There have been 119 hate crimes reported in the Bay Area since June 1995. Toward the end of the rally, one woman said, "Silence cannot be our main response to anti-lesbian violence." The crowd chanted, "No more silence! Stop the violence! Queers fight back!"

—Participant

Buyout makes bitter end to Staley lockout

Decatur, Ill.—Once they put out the old guard in the local, I knew the contract was going to pass. In the voting, more than 286 chose to give up, and 226 voted against it.

The rank and file has to share the blame for choosing to believe the lies, the lies about how this is all there is, and there ain't no more, and the company isn't going to change their mind. In my opinion, we had Pepsi by the throat. We could have won. Even the night of the voting, people were saying Staley's contract with Pepsi is up Dec. 31. Why do you think Tate & Lyle gave Dec. 31 as the deadline for us to accept their last offer? And the price of corn is going up. Staley can't pass that on to Pepsi when they want them to renew.

For the people who voted for the settlement, the defeats at Caterpillar and Firestone did have some effect. They might have looked at the UAW and Rubberworkers internationals as big and powerful, and seen what they did not do for them. Then they say, What chance do we have against Staley?

In the bridges and buyouts, there wasn't that much. People with the "85 factor"—years worked plus age—there's not a whole lot of them. If you bridged—that was the buyout for people who didn't make the 85 factor—the multiplier dropped down to \$22 for every year you worked. If you are under 55, it's less, only a \$10 to \$12 multiplier. A lot of people were believing they were going to get severance pay and full benefits, but they refused to read the contract!

Affiliating with the UPIU in 1993 was one of the worst things to happen to this local. When it was happening, I was still in the learning process. If I would have learned more, I would have said something then. We found out later that the old regional of the AIW had made a deal. There was the appearance of democracy—they held meetings and conferences. They held two or three at the AIW hall here. It gave the appearance of independence. Later on, though, you could see it was a done deal.

When we first joined the UPIU, we were already into the corporate campaign. They said, You guys are doing the right things. As soon as the merger was done, the doors were shut and locked. They basically started to dictate what we were doing. Our people put on a fight, but in the process a lot of stuff should have come to the fore. Not every decision can come to the floor, but they should have had an open discussion about control.

I was talking to some people. There are only 300 jobs left in Staley, but less than 200 people are going back. Some of the people going back, I feel sorry for them.

They think the company is going to leave them alone. One guy needs to go back for the insurance. They will try to screw him out of his pension and severance by firing him.

I severed from Staley. I wasn't going to go back for chump change. That's what people got with ten years or less. Others got 20,000 or 30,000 dollars, just 100 or so people.

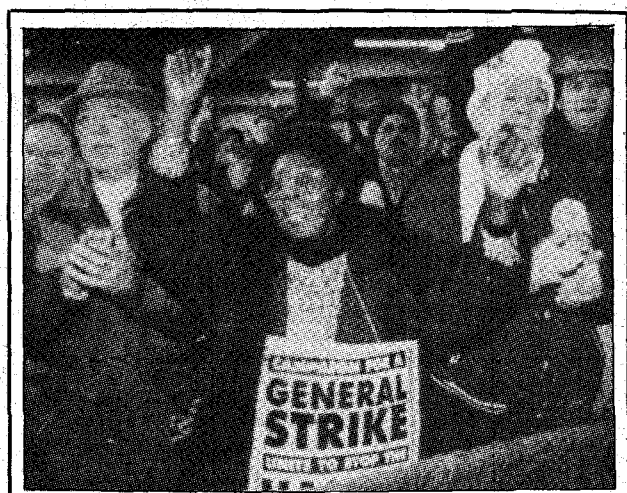
—Less-than-10-and-out

Basically it's the same agreement that we turned down in July with some enhancements. They are going to have 30-day rotations—30 days on nights, 30 days on day-shift—instead of three-day rotations. Still, they are going to have the "skill blocks" which is just another way of getting rid of people by having them take tests that Einstein couldn't pass.

It will be hell in there for the younger people. I feel sorry for them. One of my friends has two years until retirement. He said, "I'm going to try to stick it out for two years." "You won't make it if you're fired," is what I said. "Staley is going to do what it can to keep you from that pension." That's why I retired. I couldn't work with those scabs. The first time one of them got in my face, I'd knock his head off and get fired.

Caterpillar and Firestone went back under an imposed contract already. At Caterpillar, they have a recall list of 188 and 17 people were fired in the first week. These were people with a lot of time, fired just to take away their pensions. My neighbor's son says that he is not allowed to talk to any fellow employees while he's eating lunch. They have to just sit there. It's probably just to keep them from saying something to the scabs. If they catch you, they will fire you.

—New retiree



Ontario Federation of Labour workers on general strike in London, Ontario.

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

ing for work. Instead of yelling at us for taking off, let him put some men to work. When I was a casual I depended on guys booking off so I'd get a day's work. There are so many people unemployed and yet they want us to work all this overtime.

There was a terrible crash of a propane truck last year on I-287 in White Plains, N.Y. Something like 23 houses burned and six or seven people died. The investigation turned up that it was driver fatigue—the driver had gotten two-and-a-half hours of sleep in the last 49 hours. The company had put the driver on a three-day work week, which seems to be the fashion now to save on overtime costs. But this is hauling propane gas! You've got to be crazy. Criminally insane.

What is the government's response to trucking safety? They deregulate the companies and regulate the drivers. This new CDL license regulates the workers. You are responsible for your log book, your equipment, the hazardous materials you are hauling, your shipping papers and so on. All the stiff fines and penalties are directed against you.

Government deregulation was and is aimed at breaking the Teamsters. It has made a big impact, with non-union trucking being the majority now. Non-union over-the-road drivers are paid pennies on the mile. They have to drive more hours than is safe just to make a living. All drivers should be on the clock like we are. That would be the biggest safety improvement right there. Would you believe drivers who deliver gasoline are paid by the load? The government won't interfere—that's "free enterprise."

The trucking companies are now lobbying (bribing) Congress to change even that DOT rule limiting us to ten hours driving in a 15-hour work day, saying that was for the old days before "comfortable" trucks and super-highways. They want to be able to legally force us to drive more than ten hours a day, instead of having the drivers fudge their log books.

What gives me some hope that we can reverse the attack of deregulation on our jobs is that workers at non-union Overnite have been winning union representation at many terminals throughout the country, and now Conway workers have started organizing in California.

Our only safety protection is our teamster contract. In my case, when the terminal manager tries to have me work the dock and drive, I just slow down. I slow down so much that it would cost them an arm and a leg in overtime to send me out often. And if I do too much overtime and I'm tired, I just book off the next day.

We have the right to refuse unsafe equipment, to refuse to drive if we are fatigued, and to book off if we just don't feel good enough to come in and drive. There is nothing they can do, and they know it.

Dobbs workers fight back

Memphis, Tenn.—Dobbs International got the idea that since new union people were coming in, they would do whatever they want to do and have been unilaterally going against the contract.

At Dobbs, where we prepare food for airlines, each job had a position: meat slicer, breakfast belt, prep table, dessert table, first class belt, salad belt, and each woman did a particular job. The company took away the positions and just called it "cold food."

They are saying: "When you walk in in the morning, I'll use you wherever I want to use you. If I want to make you do another job, I'll take you there and if you're job isn't finished, then you got to stay here and work."

One woman was so angry. She is 61 years old and had tendinitis and they told her she had to have a doctor's statement to prove that she couldn't dip frozen ice cream which made her arm hurt. She's been there 25 years and her job is one that specifies that she's a special meals person. She told the supervisor she was damned if she was going to bring him anything. She told him, "I pay union dues, and I'm not paying them for nothing."

They discharged one man after giving him a drug test. One result was negative and the other was so low it could have been caused by taking cold medication, which he was doing. They are going after the people who were the most militant.

They've started harassing the women, asking them, "Haven't you finished yet? Aren't you through yet? You got to speed up." A few weeks ago the women started fighting back. Most of the new people they have hired are signing union cards because they see just how rough it is. We'll get there. Everyone is pulling together. With this change over, we are feeling we might get burned, but if we get burned, we're going to be fighting!

—Black woman unionist

Marx's
CAPITAL
and
Today's
Global
Crisis

BY RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

To order, see page 7.



Somerville flees union

Somerville, Tenn.—Somerville Mills closed their plant on Jan. 30, and moved this operation to Mexico. In our eight-year struggle to get a union (United Furniture Workers Local 282), the company played every card and every one was a bad decision. They had to give us a contract or move to Mexico.

They are offering management some jobs in plants 30 miles from here, but not the union activists. They feel if they offer some workers jobs, they will have to do it for all the employees and if they do that we will carry the union with us.

A lot of the workers feel if the company won't do right, then it's best they move on. They won't give us anything. We accrued a week of vacation in 1995, but the company is offering only 2½ days pay and no severance pay.

A new highway has meant a lot of jobs began moving to Fayette County. But the county executive is saying those companies should make the jobs all minimum wage and keep high wage jobs out because existing factories all pay minimum and would lose their workers. They want to keep all wages at the minimum. That's been key all along.

They say we are unskilled, but the jobs take a lot of skill: you have to focus, learn the job, maintain quality and production at the same time. They don't know what unskilled is. We sew, inspect, and ship the clothes. Sewing is the most skilled. The first thing they tell you is this isn't like sewing at home. Unskilled is what they say to pay you minimum wages.

Some people worked at Somerville Mills for 10 or 11 years and now are saying they don't ever want to go back to factory work. A lot of us have carpal tunnel syndrome and many aren't getting medical care. That will put them in a financial bind because they'll be responsible for those medical bills later.

If I had to do this struggle again I would. Until the people in the communities stand up and fight these companies, they will continue to search out areas like Fayette County and say these people are unskilled, they have no education, they have nothing and this is an opportunity for us to make a fortune. The union is going to be the only way the workers in the sweatshops are going to have a voice.

—Black working woman

Kaiser contract battle

Oakland, Cal.—There was a lot of expectation and discussion at Kaiser among workers in Local 250 (SEIU) and Local 29 (OPEIU) as our contracts approached expiration at the end of October. Now everything seems surreal. We're asking each other each day, as a joke, "What is happening with the contract?" and the reply is "What contract?" Since negotiations broke off, there's been a silence on the death of the fundamental principle of no contract, no work.

It's like management is saying go ahead, keep your logo, keep your slogans and your shell of an organization, we like it this way because we get to implement what we want and you can still say you have a union. Kaiser management now admits they have been negotiating with three local hospitals to contract out Kaiser inpatient hospital care beginning with their East Bay hospitals which they intend to close.

Management talks up their own form of "solidarity" based on us working together as a team in order to compete against the other sharks in the marketplace. Their whole team concept hardly points to a cooperative result—it is either vanquish or be vanquished: "Our team means your survival."

Management's concept of the team is that you're the mule, he's the driver, and everyone else on the road must be crushed. The labor leader's concept is that you're the soldiers, he's the general, and all the unemployed are just collateral damage. What is our concept of team? Our concept of team and cooperation is based on providing what is best for patients, not the world of cost-benefit analysis which treats health care as overhead.

Rank-and-filers question the direction the union is taking in this time of permanent restructuring. I have heard that Local 250 wants to recommend "alternative labor relations models" with a "Joint Training Institute on Union-Management Relations." I am trembling at the thought that this may be the beginning of dismantling seniority as we know it, basic historical rights of union workers. If the basic union prerogative of striking is out the window forever, what are we left with?

—Kaiser worker

Strikers' Detroit Journal

Detroit—A variety of actions by strikers from The Detroit News and Free Press and their supporters has continued in the six-month-old strike: massing to block distribution of the Sunday editions, leafletting car dealers and other major advertisers and calling for a boycott of companies like K Mart who do advertise with the Detroit Newspaper Agency, and selling and distributing the Detroit Sunday Journal, produced by strikers.

Meanwhile, the National Labor Relations Board has brokered an "agreement" under pressure from the Detroit Newspapers Agency that the unions "refrain from violence." The unions hope to bring the company before the board because negotiations have been at a standstill for months because of the company's refusal to bargain.

For information on how to support the strike, contact strike headquarters at (810) 268-4036, or the Detroit Sunday Journal at (313) 567-9898, 3100 E. Jefferson, Detroit MI 48207.

—N&L Committee Member

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
**MARXIST-HUMANIST
ARCHIVES**

Editor's note

African-American History Month 1996 finds Black America at a significant crossroad and the American Left in unprecedented disarray. Because 1995-96 marks the 40th anniversary of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, this month we reprint excerpts from Raya Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom* (1958)—the section titled "Toward a New Unity of Theory and Practice in the Abolitionist and Marxist Tradition." She was first to see in the Montgomery Bus Boycott the birth of a new kind of Black social movement in the U.S., which she held represented a movement from practice which was itself a form of theory. Along with raising the significance of the Boycott to the level of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, and pointing to the two-way road between the U.S. and the African Revolution that the Boycott opened up, Dunayevskaya dug into the philosophic meaning of the organizational form and development of the Boycott. To read this section of *Marxism and Freedom* in its full context, see chapter 16, "Automation and the New Humanism," pp. 266-287

The American intellectual has one trait in common with all intellectuals: he looks down upon the native working class as "backward." But while the Communist Party of the United States took over the American intellectual bodily, emotionally and financially, it remained without serious roots among the American working class. The intellectuals have left the Communist Party and its many fronts since then (not always for the most principled reasons). But they expose themselves currently as still rudderless on the one question where American politics has always been expressed in its sharpest form—the Negro question.

1956 opened a new stage in the Negro struggle for freedom. The fight down South was proceeding along two fronts: (1) school integration; and (2) the bus boycotts. Immediately, the "cultured" South asked for "understanding." Life magazine, so busy selling "the American way of life" abroad, responded by leading the battle of the "Northern" magazines to sell "the Southern way of life." The novelist, William Faulkner, struck the first and most telling blow by announcing that he would be willing to spill Negro blood to maintain the "Southern way of life."¹

Oppression has ever worn a white face down South, and now, so does the degeneration of its "culture." Where, in this, are the intellectuals, North or South, who oppose this cultured blood-brother of Senator Eastland, the Nobel prize winner, William Faulkner? No doubt there are many. Where they do not keep quiet, however, they write for little journals read by radicals who need no convincing. Despite the shabby role of the American Communists on the Negro Question,² these intellectuals are ready to be sucked into another popular front. Yet it is not for want of American tradition. One of the most glorious pages in American history was written by the white intellectual, precisely on the Negro Question, in that very critical period preceding the Civil War.

The Abolitionists arose in America and out of America, out of its genius, with no assistance from any foreign tradition. At the same time, the masthead of William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator* read: "The World Is My Country." The Abolitionists added a dimension to the very concept of intellectual by consciously choosing to be the means by which a social movement—the movement of the slaves for freedom—expressed itself. The intellectuals of today are busy telling us how the Communists pervert history, which is true enough. But wherein is the difference between Russians leaving out the role of Trotsky in the 1917 [Russian] Revolution, and the American textbooks which do not even mention Wendell Phillips?³ Where a Faulkner today does a lot of double-talking about being "morally" against segregation but being non-hesitant to spill the blood to preserve the alleged "underdog"—"the Southern way of life"—here is

1. Mr. Faulkner's later denial that he had said "if I had to choose between the United States and Mississippi, I would choose Mississippi even to going out and shooting Negroes in the street" is even more barbaric than his original statement. "Of course I didn't say that," reads the U.P. dispatch of March 16, 1956 from Oxford, Miss., "because I don't believe it's come to that." But just in order to make sure where he will be when it does "come to that," he used all his fictional skill to rewrite history and make "that white embattled minority who are our blood and kin" appear as the "underdog." It appears that after centuries of being the oppressors as well as the provocateurs of a Civil War these "underdogs" must be allowed to work their way out "morally." (See the original interview Faulkner gave Russell Warren Howe, New York correspondent for the *London Sunday Times*, Feb. 21, 1956, published in *The Reporter*, March 22, 1956; then his statement of being "grossly misquoted" to the U.P., March 16, 1956; both reprinted in *The Montgomery Advertiser*, Montgomery, Ala., March 17, 1956. Also "A Letter to the North" by William Faulkner in *Life*, March 5, 1956).

2. Nothing is more ludicrous in this shabby role than their veering between the two extremes, depending on which wind blows from the Kremlin: (1) of reducing the Negro question to the absurdity of demanding "for" the Negroes' "Self-Determination in the Black Belt;" and (2) asking the Negroes to forget their fight for democratic rights the minute Russia became an ally of America during World War II.

3. 1958 finally saw the publication of a biography of Phillips. *Prophet of Liberty: the Life and Times of Wendell Phillips*, by Oscar Sherwin, Bookman Associates, New York.

Montgomery Bus Boycott and the American Roots of Marxism



Harvey Dinnerstein, 1956

what Phillips had to say of the Southern way of life:

And by the South I mean likewise a principle, and not a locality, an element of civil life, in fourteen rebellious states. I mean an element which, like the days of Queen Mary and the Inquisition, cannot tolerate free speech, and punishes it with the stake. I mean the aristocracy of the skin, which considers the Declaration of Independence a sham and democracy a snare—which believes that one third of the race is born booted and spurred, and the other two thirds ready saddled for that third to ride. I mean a civilization which prohibits the Bible by statute to every sixth man of its community, and puts a matron in a felon's cell for teaching a black sister to read. I mean the intellectual, social aristocratic South—the thing that manifests itself by barbarism and the Bowie-knife, by bullying and lynch-law, by ignorance and idleness, by the claim of one man to own his brother, by statutes making it penal for the State of Massachusetts to bring an action in her courts, by statutes, standing on the books of Georgia today, offering five thousand dollars for the head of William Lloyd Garrison. That South is to be annihilated. (Loud applause.) The totality of my common sense—or whatever you may call it—is this, all summed up in one word: This country will never know peace nor union until the South (using the word in the sense I have described) is annihilated, and the North is spread over it...Our struggle therefore is between barbarism and civilization.

The struggle for the minds of men today cannot be won by hollow slogans for democracy. The Europeans have seen too much of life since 1914. They aren't buying the Voice of America culture, and for good reason. They know the Negro—not only his great contributions to American culture, from jazz to historical writing. They know what he is doing presently. There is the forceful voice of the Alabama Negroes who have taken the matter of their freedom into their own hands and have never let go in all these months.

Because the spontaneity of the walkout and the organization of their forces to keep up the boycott was a simultaneous action it is here that we can see what is truly historic and contains our future. Just watch how they have never let anything slip out of their hands during the boycott:

(1) They have been in continuous session: daily there are small meetings; three times weekly, mass meetings; at all times the new relationships.

(2) The decision is always their own. When the State Supreme Court handed down its decision against segregated buses and the bus company, hungry for their profits, hung up notices they would obey decisions, the Negroes said: We also asked for Negro bus drivers. To the city fathers, who proclaim segregation as the "Southern way of life," they, as Southerners, said that if they never ride the buses it will be soon enough.

(3) The organization of their own transportation, without either boss or political supervision, is a model.

Clearly, the greatest thing of all in this Montgomery, Alabama, spontaneous organization was its own working existence.

When Faulkner is the man whom Eisenhower asks to form a new organization of intellectuals to tell Europeans about American democracy and the other American intellectuals bear this silently, Europeans know that courage does not come out of thin air but out of conviction that you are part of and represent the wave of the future—as the Negro struggle for freedom does and the "Southern way of life" does not. Under such circumstances the American intellectual struggle to win the mind of man can only be presumptuous.⁴ Thus in society as a whole, as in production, the crisis is total.

Our point of departure has always been production only because to see the crisis in production means to un-

derstand it everywhere else. Failure to see it in production means inability to understand the crisis anywhere. This does not mean that the crisis of our age is "limited" to production. Our age has rightly been characterized as the crisis of the mind. It is precisely the totality of the crisis that compels philosophy, a total outlook. But the American intellectual has failed signally to grasp such a total outlook. He is a man divided a dozen ways and is furthest removed from reality....

Intellectual growth will first begin when new ground is broken. The elements of the new society present in the old are everywhere in evidence in the thoughts and lives of the working class. Where the workers think their own thoughts, there must be the intellectual to absorb the new impulses. Outside of that there can be no serious theory. Philosophy springs from the empirical sciences and actual life, but incorporation of these laws and generalizations into philosophy, Hegel showed, "implies a compulsion of thought itself to proceed to these concrete truths." Hegel knew whereof he spoke when he told the intellectuals of his day that "the sense of bondage springs from inability to surmount the antithesis, and from looking at what is and what happens as contradictory to what ought to be and happen."⁵

The modern intellectuals will lose their sense of guilt and bondage when they will react to "the compulsion of thought to proceed to these concrete truths"—the actions of the Negro school children in Little Rock, Arkansas, to break down segregation, the wildcats in Detroit for a different kind of labor than that under present-day Automation, the struggles the world over for freedom. The alignment precisely with such struggles in the days of the Abolitionists and of Marx is what gave these intellectuals that extra dimension as theoreticians and as human beings which enabled them to become part of the new society. It will do so again. Once the intellectual accepts the challenge of the times, then the ideal and the real are seen to be not far apart. The worker is right when he demands that work be "completely different, and not separated from life itself," and that "thinking and doing be united." Once the theoretician has caught this, just this impulse from the worker, his work does not end. It first then begins. A new unity of theory and practice can evolve only when the movement from theory to practice meets the movement from practice to theory. The totality of the world crisis has a new form—fear at the "beep-beep" from the new man-made moon. The American rush "to catch up" with the sputnik, like the Russian determination to be the first to launch the satellite, is not in the interest of "pure science" but for the purpose of total war. Launching satellites into outer space cannot solve the problems of this earth. The challenge of our times is not to machines, but to men. Intercontinental missiles can destroy mankind, they cannot solve its human relations. The creation of a new society remains the human endeavor. The totality of the crisis demands, and will create, a total solution. It can be nothing short of a New Humanism.

5. Hegel's [Smaller] *Logic*, paragraph 147, p. 269.

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Essay Article

by Sheila Fuller

At a time when capitalism is deflecting attention from its deep structural crises by scapegoating people of color and people of minority ethnicities as "the Other," the legacy of the struggle in Bosnia which sought to defend the idea of a multicultural existence demands to be comprehended. This struggle may not have spoken a revolutionary language, but it does have revolutionary implications which have to be drawn out and developed. I would argue that it had revolutionary implications that went beyond pluralism and thus challenged those in solidarity with Bosnia to develop a philosophic framework for comprehending what was new in the Bosnian struggle.

It is toward this aim that I would like to take up two thinkers who have tried to address the question of what is new in the Bosnian struggle and have raised critical questions about the concepts of identity, difference and otherness, in search of a philosophic conception that does not annihilate "the Other."

MULTICULTURALISM AND FREEDOM

Dzevad Karahasan has written *Sarajevo: Exodus of a City*,¹ a beautiful testament to the multicultural character of Bosnia and its bringing together of the East and the West, represented in integrated relationships and living arrangements as well as in Bosnia's history and architecture. In a moving passage in which he responds to the question of a U.S. reporter about why the people of Sarajevo did not accept the partition of Bosnia along religious and cultural lines, he writes:

"I replied that I agreed wholeheartedly if he could only propose the way to divide Bosnia and Sarajevo. As my neighbors were taking shelter in the basement (shells literally pouring down around the building), I could concretely demonstrate to the American a sample of the ethnic structure of Bosnia and Sarajevo within our building. Pointing my fellow tenants out, one by one, I showed that only one out of ten married couples occupying the ten apartments in the building is of the same ethnicity (I myself noticed that fact only then). How could you possibly divide that I asked. If Sarajevo were to be divided, I could not have a bath because the tub would remain in the Serb province of my wife; my Serb wife could not wash her face, though, because the washbasin would remain in my province. The same goes for nine out of ten apartments in our building. I'm afraid that that could be complicated even for such an able divider as Mr. Cyrus Vance." (pp. 46-47)

Karahasan, a prominent literary critic and drama professor, situates this multicultural element in a postmodernist theoretical framework which he counterposes to what he calls a dialectical concept of culture. He considers the Bosnian cultural system a "dramatic" system in which "the fundamental relationship between the elements of the system is oppositional tension, which means that its elements are poised against one another, and mutually bound by that opposition, wherein they define each other. These elements enter the system—which is the totality of a higher order—without losing their primordial nature or relinquishing any of the properties they possess independently...The fundamental property of this kind of cultural system is pluralism." (pp. 5-7)

He contrasts this system to his understanding of a dialectical system which he contends is "a monistic cultural system...mutual devouring or the containment of the lower within the higher, or the weaker within the stronger. Every member of a dramatic cultural system needs the Other as proof of his or her own identity, because one's own particularity is being proven and articulated in relationship to the particularities of the Other. But within a dialectical system an Other is only seemingly the Other, while it is actually the masked I." (pp. 6-7)

Another scholar who has tried to explore the new questions that the struggle against genocide in Bosnia has raised, is Mujeeb Khan, a political scientist. In his paper, "Accounting for Genocide in Europe at the 'End of History': Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Crisis of Western Liberalism and the End of the 'New World Order,'" (1995) he argues that Bosnian Muslims occupy a position similar to European Jews. They are Europeans, blonde, blue-eyed, secular, and only different from Serbs to the extent that their heritage represents a coming together of the East and the West, the Bogomil or radical Christian influence, the Ottoman and the Austro-Hungarian influence.

Precisely because the Bosnian Muslims are so much like Bosnian Serbs they undermine the distinction between self and Other which is necessary for a campaign to create an ethnically pure state. That is why, he argues, there has been a planned effort by Serbian nationalists to annihilate Bosnian people of Muslim origin.

He tries to shed light on the Serbian government's campaign of ethnic cleansing against people of Muslim origin by exploring a very famous section of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*: "Lordship and Bondage." In this section Hegel begins by arguing that self-consciousness is only possible when the self is acknowledged or "recognized" by another self-consciousness. Hence dialectics is inherently about recognition.

Hegel demonstrates the process of arriving at this recognition by beginning with the bare level of life. At this stage, each individual consciousness views the Other as an unessential object. Each aims at the destruction and death of the Other and risks her life in a life and death struggle, in order to gain certainty of being for self. Killing the Other, however, would end the possibility for the self to gain certainty of itself and recognition from the

The philosophic meaning of Bosnia's struggle

Other. Hence this life and death struggle results in an independent consciousness whose essential nature is to be for itself, and a dependent consciousness whose essence is life or existence for another. The former is the master, the latter is the bondsman. A form of recognition has arisen that is one-sided and unequal.

Hegel demonstrates the process of transcendence of this unequal relationship by showing how the slave who is supposed to be the inferior consciousness actually



Rally in Sarajevo on Dec. 11 of Muslims, Serbs and Croats for a multiethnic Bosnia. The banner reads "This is the city for all peoples who want to live in it."

Editorial

U.S. troops aid partition of Bosnia

Nothing more starkly reveals the nature of the ongoing U.S. troop deployment to Bosnia than the refusal of U.S. and NATO commanders to lift a finger against the perpetrators of "ethnic cleansing." Although over 20,000 U.S. troops have now taken up positions in Bosnia, the Clinton administration refuses to take action against Serbian leaders and militiamen who massacred tens of thousands of Bosnians over the last four years.

This despite the fact that in mid-January John C. Shattuck, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, personally toured the killing fields of Glogova, where 5,000 Bosnians were buried following a brutal massacre by Serbs after their capture of the nearby town of Srebrenica. U.S. military commanders responded to Shattuck's tour by announcing that U.S. troops would not guarantee security for those investigating the massacre, let alone arrest those responsible for it.

The U.S. troop deployment actually rewards the Serbs for the massacre—which it knew about at the time through satellite imagery—since the area around Srebrenica was given to the Serbs by the Dayton accords (Srebrenica was two-thirds Muslim before the war).

It was also reported in mid-January that Serbian soldiers were hiding the remains of thousands of Bosnians killed in other massacres in an open pit mine in Ljubija. U.S. and NATO commanders found neither the time nor the inclination to stop this atrocity, even though British soldiers have a regional headquarters in Ljubija. As Lt. Col. Benjamin Barry put it, "Investigating mass grave sites is not our job." (The New York Times, Jan. 14.)

The U.S. "job" in Bosnia is instead defined by the "single mandate" of enforcing a line of separation between Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian troops. U.S. and NATO troops occupy a demilitarized zone of three kilometers between the contending forces and patrol a strand of land 20 kilometers alongside of it.

While the Clinton administration is touting this as an example of the U.S.'s "peacekeeping" role, this rewards Serbian aggression by dividing the country into three distinct "ethnic" enclaves. The Serbs have been given 49% of the country, with the rest going to the Bosnians and Croats.

The U.S. imposed this "peace plan" just as the Serbs were about to be handed a major military defeat. Bosnian and Croatian troops were about to liberate 75% of the country when the U.S. demanded that their assault on Banja Luka be called off. Even Serbian Gen. Ratko Mladic later stated that the Serbs were on the verge of being totally routed. No wonder the U.S. is now called "Serbia's greatest friend" by the Serbian government and its state-controlled press.

The fact that the Bosnian government, under heavy U.S. pressure, signed onto the Dayton accords in no way means that Bosnia's struggle is compatible with U.S. interests. Although, as Roy Gutman recently observed, "The Bosnian government, which appeared on the verge of a military victory, let itself be treated as a vanquished land," the U.S.-guided effort to partition the country is being actively opposed by many Bosnians.

One sign of this is that many Bosnians are demanding that the international troops be deployed behind rather than on the cease-fire lines, so that partition is not allowed to become an automatic process. Another is that Bosnians are working with a group of Serbs from the Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza who have broken from their reac-

gains an independent consciousness because she shapes and fashions things through her activity of laboring and is engaged in a more genuine overcoming of material externality.

Mujeeb Khan situates the present genocide of the people of Muslim origin in Bosnia within the earlier stage of the master-slave dialectic before recognition is reached. This is how Khan expresses it: "The 'Other' in Hegel's dialectic of recognition was enslaved and not annihilated because his existence was necessary for recognizing the Master. However, if this 'Other' transgresses definitional boundaries and undermines the Master's certainty of 'Self,' recognition is muddled and he must either be expelled to a distance or eliminated. This has especially been the case where distinct minorities like European Jews and Muslims find themselves stranded across clearly demarcated frontiers such as the Mediterranean separating 'self' from 'other' and 'orient' from 'occident' and thereby seem to undermine the cohesiveness and ideological viability of the self-identity held by the dominant group...as Zygmunt Bauman notes in discussing the modern Jewish Question, 'In short, they undermined the very difference between hosts and guests, the native and the foreign. And as nationhood became the paramount basis of group self-constitution, they came to undermine the most basic of differences; the difference between 'us' and 'them' '" (p. 13).

This profound analysis sheds light on why people of multicultural origin are being annihilated in Bosnia and why this campaign of ethnic cleansing has included the use of rape camps by the Serbian government. It is not only Bosnian Muslims who undermine the distinction between self and Other in the former Yugoslavia. Any multicultural person in Bosnia has faced extinction precisely because her or his mixed heritage undermines the notion of a "pure" Serbian identity.

BEYOND PLURALISM

Karahasan and Khan raise some very important questions about the notions of identity, difference and other- (continued on page 10)

tionary leaders who were trying to get them to leave the area once it comes under Bosnian government control.

The depth of the sentiment for a truly multiethnic Bosnia was especially reflected in a demonstration in Sarajevo on Dec. 11 of Bosnian Muslims, Serbs and Croats opposing efforts to partition the country.

The ruling powers, on the other hand, are concerned with Bosnia only insofar as it can be used for their own narrow geopolitical purposes. As a result of the Dayton accords and the troop deployment, France has rejoined the military command of NATO for the first time since 1966, 1,600 Russian troops in Bosnia are being commanded by an American general; and Hungary, only six years ago a member of the Warsaw Pact, is a staging area for the biggest NATO operation since World War II. Far from being aimed to aid Bosnia, the Dayton accords are an effort to refurbish NATO through military intervention.

As against the machinations of the rulers, we must keep our eyes and ears turned to the voice and reason of the struggle for a truly multiethnic society. This can be heard even in areas where "ethnic strife" has been rife—such as Mostar, where Croatian troops are trying to solidify the partition of the city into ethnic units. As Alija Behram reports in "Living in the Ghetto," "Despite the tragic memories, people are ready to live together again with their former neighbors. They feel this way because they want a unified Bosnia, and know that any other option will leave open the possibility of renewed conflict." (War Report, November/December 1995)

This is the sense and reason that the U.S. and NATO are trying to subvert with the Dayton accords and their troop deployment. We must continue to stand with the Bosnian people in their struggle for a unified Bosnia.

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1. Dzevad Karahasan, *Sarajevo: Exodus of a City* (New York: Kodansha International, 1994)

STATE OF THE UNION/STATE OF THE WORLD: 1996

I think most Americans, Left and Right, are utterly disillusioned with party politics—even more than Europeans are with their version. The European parliamentary system, flawed as it is, still allows room for minority parties to have some influence, more than can be said for our Tweedledum-Tweedledee two-party system. This is a millenarian age. It isn't just religious fundamentalists who think the world we have always known is falling apart. The old order—capitalist as well as Communist—is being discredited.

Ivan Bachur
Warren, Mich.

* * *

When the well-known 60 Minutes program of CBS retracted an important story on the tobacco industry for reasons which Walter Cronkite found "abhorrent," it was not simply the fact that the tobacco industry has unlimited billions at its disposal to fight and win any kind of lawsuit, but most of these companies are also the owners of major advertisers (in some cases even of the TV network itself), so no network can risk the loss of millions in advertising revenue by broadcasting the truth. Most politicians like Phil Gramm (who got \$4 million from major corporations during one fundraising dinner) are fed by the same hand through the lobbyists (if not directly). In a society where even the Supreme Court justices are nominated by the same politicians who are in the pockets of the same major corporations who dictate all aspects of life to the populace (what you shall hear, see, eat, drink, etc.) there is simply no legal way to obtain justice.

Mad as hell
Vancouver

* * *

The Federal Express pilots are not just fighting Fed Ex, but the city of Memphis as a whole. The businessmen don't recognize that these are humans out here trying to work and save their jobs. They're constantly saying: Fed Ex says our deliveries will be made on time, so everything is fine. Some Fed Ex employees held a rally to let the company know they stood behind the pilots 100%.

People are saying the pilots make \$140,000 a year. So what? It's not money they're asking for. People wouldn't just walk away from a job like that if the benefits, the overtime they're working—which they usually do on their off days—were OK. If the pilots don't win the strike, that's going to be a hit against everybody.

Dobbs worker
Memphis

* * *

In response to John Alan's column (December N&L) on being involved in politics even if you know its limitations: I worked with a support group for Haitian people. The Left was opposed to Aristide going back to Haiti and other people were for it. At a forum, a Haitian woman, in response to people on the Left, said, "When they are starving, people have to do certain things to survive." For 20 years I have heard some socialists say, Democrats are the same as Republicans, but people at the very bottom can't do that. Black people fought and died for the right to vote.

African-American
New York

At the domestic violence program where I work we generally do not identify with the more middle-class, bureaucratic (and Caucasian) feminist organizations such as NOW. Tammy Bruce, president of the L.A. chapter, made statements in October and November showing a complete lack of sensitivity, insight and respect: "What we need to teach our children is...not about racism, but about violence against women." And she said she didn't want to appear on a talk show regarding the Simpson case to "argue with a bunch of Black women." The national NOW has criticized these statements, apparently after complaints flooded their offices.

Many feminists are not part of that thinking and are struggling for the dignity and safety of all men and women. Vigils were held in the San Fernando Valley in November and December to protest both domestic violence and racism. This is a challenge to all of us aiming for powerful changes in all forms of human relationships.

Anna Maillon
Los Angeles

On the second anniversary of the Zapatista uprising, we see two developments in Mexico. One is the government's offer to pass constitutional amendments on some Indian rights—which fails to impress many because the progressive elements of the Constitution are already ignored. It's written there, for example, that the minimum wage shall be sufficient to provide for a family.

A second development is the EZLN's decision to transform itself into the Zapatista Front for National Liberation—exactly what many leftists have been arguing against for months, saying that to the extent that the Zapatistas move towards mainstream politics and away from their arms, they will be surrendering the only thing that has given them legitimacy.

Whether or not this proves to be true, the Zapatistas have shown that the problems are very deep and will require the kind of movement that involves all the forces of revolt. The occupation of lands continues, as do the military's forced evacuations. The fact that the government has the upper hand in these cat and mouse games does not mean all is up.

Mitch Weerth
California

* * *

Your valuable combination of theoretical analysis and political intervention is more important now than in a long time.

Radical editor
Arizona

●

ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

The current talk about Israeli-Palestinian peace is so strikingly limited to "politics as usual" that the mass outpouring for a real peace after Rabin's assassination seems all but forgotten. That's what makes the December Lead by Peter Wermuth so timely. It is common to identify revolution with war, and pose peace and revolution as opposites. But what kind of peace can be achieved without a revolutionary transformation? The real question never gets posed in news reports: what kind of Israel, what kind of Palestine? The best part of the Lead, for me, was the discussion of the internal PLO politics and the shortcomings of the Israeli Left. In the Lead's conclusion on the need to listen to new voices, the new voices of the Palestinian feminists Wermuth quoted are right-on!

Woman's liberationist
Oakland, Cal.

* * *

I especially appreciated the last part of the December Lead on listening to new voices. When women, or the most oppressed, lead the movement, it will really be for everyone. The outrage the Palestinian women met is an indication of just how needed their criticism is. Before Rabin's assassination, when speculating on what would be an ideal solution I thought co-existence would be pretty good. Compared to apartheid it still seems good, but what would be a real solution is still the question.

New reader
Bay Area

* * *

We send best wishes for a new year in which we aim to nurture the newly planted saplings of peace in the parched earth of this war-torn region of the Middle East.

Mapam youth
Israel

●

STATE OF THE UNIONS

Your story on "Union Kills Strike at Profex" (December 1995 N&L) was really good. Your readers may want to know what has happened since. We lost—the union did something to us. They told us they were going to pull the picket line down. A VP from Washington gave a letter to a security guard to carry in. We got hold of it. They said they would send us back in unconditionally.

The Labor Board ruled the decertification vote held without the strikers was no good, so they held another with both the strikers and the scabs. We lost, 44-17. The company lawyer visited, and no sooner had he left than they put up a big banner outside the building: "Union free and proud to be."

I don't think any of us will go back in.

Readers' Views

We could hardly stand to be in there with the union. We sure couldn't stand to go back in there without one.

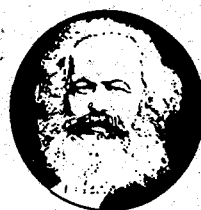
Profex striker
Memphis

* * *

N&L needs to deal more clearly with the degeneration of "legal business unions" of the AFL-CIO and why these unions are today almost an appendage to corporate management. They are as hostile to workers' attempts to fight back as the bosses are.

Your group was correct for all those years about the Eastern state-capitalist block, exposing their exploitative system that was wearing a socialist mask. But you have failed to follow up your political-philosophic achievement by attacking state-capitalist forces here in the U.S. who throw dust and confusion in workers' eyes about socialism.

Supporter
Los Angeles



TEARING
AWAY THE
FETISH

We can't improve on the paragraph in Raya Dunayevskaya's 1950 letter printed in the "Writings from the Archives" column in the December issue, which says that nothing can tear off the fetishism of the commodity-form Marx discovered with the sole exception of "freely associated men planning their own production directly—and even then, only when this plan is not an abstraction but is being put into practice." Only new human relations can overcome the reality of what Marx saw were "social relations between things and material relations between people."

Whenever intellectuals want to attach special import to their efforts, they call it a "paradigm shift." By that they mean to propose a different conceptual window through which to view reality. Calls for paradigm shifts abound in the face of today's bewildering economic crisis. The paradigm shifters pass over the absolute character of this crisis and the need for a philosophic framework in which theory speaks to subjective historic impulses like the L.A. rebellion of 1992.

Computer analyst
Bay Area

* * *

The letter by Raya Dunayevskaya printed in the December N&L on the commodity-form, was obviously written as a letter between thinkers who were familiar with the material. Could you print a follow-up, or commentary on it? I know you said to read volume one of Capital along with it. But what is the importance of this letter? Does she define certain things differently here than other Marxists? Can this apply to something happening this moment?

African-American friend
New York

* * *

I am in the middle of reading Volume one of Capital. This letter is a whirlwind summary of Volume one of Capital. It is very related to Raya's unique view of Marx and the work she went on to develop on Marx. It was important to publish the letter because if you are going to understand philosophy, you have to understand how it developed.

Anne Jaclard
New York

* * *

The richness of political and social analysis in the December N&L Editorial—on the frenzied demand by union officialdom, capital and the State for labor discipline—is made more substantial by its close proximity to the selection from the Marxist-Humanist Archives. Dunayevskaya's examination of the development of Marx's concept of the commodity, from his 1859 Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy to the profound understanding reached in the 1873 edition of Capital, illuminates the attention the December issue gave to the creative potential of those subjected to a world order dominated by this value form.

Young revolutionary
Chicago

CAN YOU HELP?

I would like it very much if a donor could be found to help me keep receiving News & Letters. I can assure you that whatever materials I receive will be passed around to other prisoners.

Imprisoned reader
Texas

* * *

* Our group works with the rural poor in Sri Lanka. We have come to know through your paper of a number of important books published by or available from N&L. We believe they would be helpful for us to understand the present crisis of world economy and related issues, including feminism. The articles that have appeared in N&L have explained how relevant Marxism is in the present context. We are too poor to send you any money, but would it somehow be possible to send us the following for use in our work here: Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution; Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western Civilization; and Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis?

Women's section coordinator
Development Centre
Sri Lanka

* * *

Editors' note: We have established a Donor's Fund for just such requests. Readers, can you help?

●

HISTORY, LITERATURE AND THE BLACK DIMENSION

Bringing the centennials of the deaths of Engels and Frederick Douglass together, as Lou Turner did in the December "Black World" column, is very important. What brings together Engels writing his History of the Working Class the same year Douglass wrote his slave narrative is that both are about liberation. Most Americans don't have much interest in history because it's presented as "just" the past. The Marxist-Humanist concept of history is that it is in the present and in the future.

When Engels wrote on the Peasant Wars in Germany he showed how Luther sold that revolt out, and Germany was left out of European history for a long time. It's important to see that the same dialectics existed in the U.S. in the post-Reconstruction period. A new reality did not emerge and we got Booker T. Washington instead. The new point was reached only with the 1963 March on Washington.

John Alan
California

* * *

I had the pleasure of hearing the contemporary Black writer, Toni Morrison, reading excerpts from her new novel-in-progress, tentatively entitled Paradise. While she exhorted her audience to understand "spiritual belief as animating force," she returned many times to the need for human freedom, vision and justice. It was encouraging to hear this leading intellect condemning writers who "bankrupt subtlety to bankroll impact" and castigating thinkers who "substitute psychological jargon for philosophic precision." Morrison is critically engaging problems of utopianism, exclusivism and societal inequities.

Feminist
Philadelphia



WOBBLES
AND
LABOR HISTORY

Don't forget to let your readers know that the IWW's 1996 Labor History Calendar features 13 photographs spanning eight decades, from a 1903 Arizona miners strike to a 1989 protest by South African workers. They are only \$8.50 each (including postage) and can be ordered directly from us.

Industrial Workers of the World
P.O. Box 204
Oak Park, IL 60303-0204

* * *

Yours is a good paper! With union news! Here's my sub.

Wobbly from way back
California

BOSNIA: ACHILLES HEEL OF WESTERN 'CIVILIZATION'

The extent and content of the coverage of international news in the December issue is impressive. The significance seen in the article on Bosnia which discusses "For Whom the Bell Tolls" to stress that the horrors would not end here. The world is one; each country is intimately related to every other. I was also glad to read the counterview to the October issue's Youth column review of anarchism: Left, Right, and Green. I consider it a much more sophisticated approach to the possibilities of a dialogue between Marxists and anarchists, which is important to me as I come from that tradition.

Young intellectual
San Francisco

The Peace Community I am currently active with has begun to study the issue of Bosnia. All agree that the systematic slaughter of any society is immoral. The fact that this is a multiethnic society is particularly troubling. At the same time we question the sincerity of the U.S.'s humanitarianism." This nation has never gone to war for anything other than profit and power. Do you have a more current pamphlet on Bosnia than the one that rightly calls it the "Achilles Heel of Western Civilization"?

Activist
California

The shallowness of the "moral concern" expressed by President Clinton for those suffering in Bosnia is revealed in the way it apparently does not extend to the victims of ethnic chauvinism in Chechnya, East Timor and the Kurdish regions of Iran, Iraq and Turkey. All that is revealed by the Dayton agreement is the triumph of ethnic chauvinism and the denial of the agency of the Bosnian people in their struggle against Serbian fascism.

Revolutionary
Chicago

The articles that have appeared in &L for the past four years on Bosnia are a powerful inducement to read N&L on an ongoing basis. By now even bourgeois news reporters are highlighting how "peace" means only the hardening

of the "ethnic cleansing" that has taken place. But to understand it, you need that ongoing Marxist-Humanist analysis. The pamphlet on "Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western Civilization" needs to be expanded to include all the material since 1993. It is even more important now that the U.S. military is there.

Librarian
Detroit



FIGHTING ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

Environmental racism is real. It means introducing polluting substances into a community that has no political clout but a lot of social problems. We don't mean pollution just by industrial companies. Abandoned buildings are also an environmental problem. Is there lead or asbestos in the building? The issue of lead is not just a housing issue, it's also a health issue and can be an economic issue.

We are talking about environmental justice. Every level of government has deliberately neglected communities that have environmental problems. It affects everyone. The air pollution in my community affects the whole city of Chicago. The state of Wisconsin is suing the state of Illinois for its air emissions problem. We have a Primer for Environmental Action we can send to show others how to get involved.

Cheryl Johnson
People for Community Recovery
13116 S. Ellis
Chicago, IL 60627

It wasn't widely publicized, but in his first two years of office, President Clinton was making the tiniest little baby steps toward adopting some rules for environmental equity in the actions of the federal government. But after last year's congressional elections, it came to a stop. The Republican Congress doesn't even make a distinction between environmental protection in the wilderness and environmental protection related to

human health. They're against all of it, trying to take away every legal avenue used by environmental justice groups to protect their communities. They represent capitalism in economic crisis, ready to sacrifice every bit of protection to capital's insatiable hunger to grow.

Environmentalist
Chicago

Marx and Engels had a lot to say about the environmental degradation in the communities where industrialism arose. They also talked about breaking down the division between town and country, which I understand today as the contradiction between needing technological growth, but also needing to live in a clean and healthy environment. Marx's work for ending the system of production for profit that has created our terrible pollution has a lot to say to the environmental movement today.

Library worker
Chicago

THE BRITISH SCENE

For a socialist British resident looking across the channel at the exciting events in France in December and then back here—where the House of Windsor and the Major government still apparently survive; and where Labour instead of attacking the establishment is engaged in trying to outflank the Tories—it all looks a bit mournful. There are signs, however feeble, that things might be about to change—signs of industrial activity (whether among highly skilled post office technicians or the semi-skilled militants on the docks) that hasn't been seen since the miners' struggle ten years ago. And one straw in the wind could even be Ken Loach's new film about Spain. Since it's based on Orwell's "Homage to Catalonia" it would not have been expected to capture general interest. But it's not only the far Left that is going to it. It will be the first time many see a leftist anti-communism. There are also signs that the post-Stalinist-collapse political debate is beginning to bring people to a revolutionary position.

Laurens Otter
England



THE PRISON CONDITION

Here is a quote from Little Turtle, Master General of the Miami Indians, 1791, which I want to use as a "frontispiece" for this letter: "If our people fight one tribe at a time, all will be killed. They can cut off our fingers one by one, but if we join together, we will make a powerful fist."

We are trying to help ourselves so we can live behind these walls in "peace." Most of the camp gangs or organizations here have openly stated they will not cut, kill or fight another inmate other than in an act of self-defense. If they do, it will be in violation and others will deal with the violator. So far, it does seem to be working out.

I also want you to know that I have been passing some of the books you have sent to me around to other inmates who wanted something good to read. I hope they will help them as much as they helped me.

Prisoner
Illinois

Conditions in overcrowded state prisons remain disgraceful. Recently a group of county sheriffs threatened to dump state prisoners they were being forced to keep. They were placated at the last minute by promises to pay more for county jail "overflow" prisoners. Efforts to change the penal code have been unfruitful since many legislators promise long sentences for criminal offenses of all types. An example: possession of marijuana for sale can bring a life sentence.

Steady reader
Oklahoma

I can't put into words all that I think your organizing efforts for Mumia Abu-Jamal signifies. The state is powerless in its efforts to silence the truth of capitalism's racism, greed and utter contempt for life when masses of people fight for justice. Winning a stay of execution for Mumia is a candle in the dark of these times.

Longtime subscriber
Illinois

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Black/Red View

by John Alan

O, yes,
I say it plain,
America never was America to me,
And yet I swear this oath—
America will be!

—Langston Hughes, 1922

February is the month in which we celebrate African-American history. That celebration tries to fill a need African Americans have to tell their own history as an act of self-determination. The first definitive expression of this was George Washington Williams' 1883 *History of the Negro Race From 1619 to 1880: Negro As Slave, Soldier, And as Citizen*.

In this century, during the great migration of Blacks from the South to the northern cities, the desire for historic self-determination found its expression in the work of Carter G. Woodson. In the 1920s, Woodson conceived and projected the idea that Black history should be publicly celebrated and taught in public schools.

In the 1930s, when the Black masses were beginning to integrate the union movement against the advice of their Black leadership, W.E.B. DuBois' *Black Reconstruction in America* broke with all traditional concepts of Blacks in American history. DuBois had made the startling discovery that Black masses in motion (slaves) were a self-determining force crucial to winning the Civil War.

In our historical period, after almost a generation of Black mass protest and urban revolts, came Vincent Harding's valiant announcement (in 1970) that a new "Black History" was going to break with "Negro History" and face the chaos of Western civilization. Yet nothing comparable to the work of Williams, Woodson and DuBois emerged. Instead, we have seen African-American historians trekking toward academia and along with their white colleagues publishing dozens of books a year filled with interesting facts about African-American history and culture. What these post-Civil Rights Black Power Movement historians have not discovered is a new subjective transforming dimension in African-American

Carter G. Woodson's historical absolute

mass thinking, which the Czech philosopher Karel Kosik calls the "universally human in every epoch" that "devalues facticity."

What was "universally human" for both Williams and Woodson was African-American self-identity, i.e., the recognition of their history by the other, the rest of the nation. John Hope Franklin tells us in his biography that George Washington Williams, even before he wrote his history, let it be known in an oration that he thought it was wrong for historians to neglect the role of Blacks in the American revolution. Williams said: "To take the Negro out of the history of the Revolution is to rob it of one of its most attractive and indispensable elements; it is to impoverish it by the withdrawal of some of its wealthy and enduring facts. In short, the Negro is an integral part of revolutionary history."

Williams saw Blacks as the true measure of freedom in the U. S., even among the abolitionists. He wrote that the writings of Black abolitionists "expose the true character of slavery, inform the public mind, stimulate healthy thought, and touch the heart of two continents with a sympathy almost divine."

Years later, Carter G. Woodson took on the task of lifting Black history out of its then marginal status directly into the American mind, especially the African-American mind. If this were accomplished, Woodson thought, it would reveal: "...that we are not an inferior people, but simply a people whose progress had been impeded." Thus Black history could be the foundation upon which African Americans could "claim the right to share in the blessings of democracy."

Today, we can easily say that Woodson's historical absolute, i.e., that getting the consciousness of the other to recognize the historical greatness of Black people will end racism and open a path to real democracy, is rather naive and one-sided. Frantz Fanon has shown that the dialectical process of recognition has to be mutual, or it is nothing. But we should not hasten to condemn Woodson as being totally wrong. His subject was Black people

and Black consciousness, and his purpose was to prevent the race from becoming a "negligible factor in the thought of the world."

We don't know how Woodson would have specifically developed that idea, but his ability to see African-American history as a function of thought at the time of the "great migration" remains his undeveloped legacy in African-American thought. It's a legacy based upon historic reason and life, which can determine the way we celebrate African-American history month in 1996.

'East Texas Hot Links'

Chicago—The story of the transit of Black slaves from Africa to the Americas was known as the Middle Passage. As with all stories of bondage and liberation, it cannot be told without describing the treachery of Africans who assisted the white slave traders. The Onyx Theater production of "East Texas Hot Links" updates this story, here told in the setting of the 'Top o' the Hill Cafe in 1955 Texas, located somewhere along a future highway between Houston and Dallas.

The coming interstate excites the tensions between the frequenters of 'Top o' the Hill and is the motif for the plot which unfolds with an inevitability of its own. In the telling of this tragedy lies the importance of "Hot Links." For instead of the ethos of No Exit, the life in this cafe exudes a humanism not to be vanquished.

Intent on making his way in the white world, XL Dancer (Michael Williams) is cagey, then defensive about serving as a recruiter of Black labor for the white contractor, even if it means delivering Black men who end up dead. He is the Traitor. As his treachery unfolds, the deep and fast dialogue is a dance into which all enter. Playwright Eugene Lee draws wholly believable and compelling figures.

Columbus Frye (Alfred H. Wilson) is the landlord of the unsavory XL. As the paternal judge, he moves from sheltering XL to ultimately casting the traitor out, at least out of his apartment. Roy Moore (Trent Harrison Smith) is of good looks and big talk and a good time. Boochie Reed (Greg Hollimon) is a gambler whose towering presence and booming voice lend authority to his mystical predictions of crises. He is the Seer. Buckshot (Freeman Coffey) leaves the farm long enough to visit the bar to satisfy his large appetite. His warm and straight-spoken passion help us see the kind of people who came off the land to give life to the southern civil rights struggles.

Delmus Green (Craig Boyd) is Youth, whose idealism places him in harm's way for having taken up with precisely the wrong woman. Delivering an existential view of Black folks' place in the world, though with humor and charm, is the blind philosopher Adolph (Willie B. Goodson). Coming from a mind suitable for a life of letters, his satirical commentary is so funny that he must believe that better things are possible.

The owner of the bar, Charletta Simpkins (Marsha Estell), is a woman of dreams for maintaining this communal space, and a woman of action for helping Youth and Philosophy escape the climactic vigilante attack on the 'Top o' the Hill Cafe and to see another day.

Often Klan repression is considered ignorant if not regressive. But truer to fact, in "Hot Links" the neo-slavers are leading progress, not human progress but rather technological development. In its face, "East Texas Hot Links" and the Onyx Theater Players show us a crucible for human progress.

—Jim Mill

30th anniversary of the Maryland Freedom Union

On Feb. 9, 1966, some 20 Black women, working as nurses' aides, housekeepers and kitchen staff, walked off their jobs at Lincoln Nursing Home in Baltimore, Maryland. They called field secretaries from the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) with whom they had met the previous week and told them that Lincoln was "on strike," and that the CORE organizers had better come down to Lincoln to show the workers "how to run a proper picket line." The workers, who made as little as 35¢ an hour and worked up to 72 hours a week, became the nucleus of what they called "a new kind of union," the Maryland Freedom Union (MFU).

For more than a year, the MFU shook up the poverty-wage job scene in the ghettos of Baltimore, organizing hospitals and nursing homes, retail and food stores, and a print shop. Merging strikes and Black consumer boycotts, the MFU's initial organizing drives stunned inner-city merchants and aroused opposition from traditional AFL-CIO unions. MFU members created a union study group on Black and labor history, reading *American Civilization on Trial* and inviting its author, Raya Dunayevskaya, to lecture at the MFU's Freedom House. Dunayevskaya's suggestion that workers view themselves as "self-developing thinkers" made an impact.

While it flourished, the MFU's membership, many of them recently arrived from the rural South, created a union quite different from the typical AFL-CIO affiliate. What drew so many to the MFU was that this organization called itself a freedom union, and sought to organize low-wage workplaces as an integral part of a movement to transform the whole of American society. As a forerunner of both the Black caucuses within established



Button design by MFU president Vivian Jones, a nursing home nurses' aide.

unions and Black feminist critiques of civil rights organizations, the Maryland Freedom Union was a unique learning experience. Thirty years later, that "new kind of union" is needed more than ever.

—Michael Flug

Editor's note: For more on the significance of the MFU, see The Maryland Freedom Union: Black Working Women Doing and Thinking (Detroit: News and Letters, 1966); and Michael Flug, "Organized Labor and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s; the Case of the Maryland Freedom Union," in Labor History 31(3), Summer 1990, pp. 322-346.

Black World

(continued from page 1)

dustries, under their structural adjustment policies, international investors make the insidious demand that Haiti first borrow millions of dollars to upgrade these state industries before they are sold to private corporate interests.

The Haitian masses are thereby made to subsidize international capitalist interests, as well as those of Haiti's private sector. By this means will the private sector, in concert with international finance capital, lower the production costs of Haiti's miserable assembly zones (also called "zones for slavery").

With labor costs in the assembly zones at an all-time low of 15 gourdes (US \$1) per day, or 12 cents an hour, the imperialist still demand that, if Haiti's sweatshop industries are to be competitive, its port, transport, and utility facilities be upgraded by subsidies squeezed from the masses through taxes, and diverting development aid. This is a more miserable version of Clinton's NAFTA policy, for it calls for the drastic reduction of tariffs and fees charged to U.S. enterprises, on the one hand, while it pits pitifully poor Haiti workers against poor sweated labor in the U.S.

Major U.S. corporations, like Sears, Wal-Mart and the Walt Disney Company, have contracted out to U.S. and

Haiti resists imperialist future

Haitian garment companies. At these firms, Haitian women workers may work as many as 50 days straight and up to 70 hours a week without a day off. And while on average Haiti's urban working class requires \$24 a week for food, shelter and education, workers make less than 60% of a family's basic needs.

Nevertheless, Haiti remains a society in revolt against the subservient status imposed upon it by its ruling class and international imperialism. Haitian police along with UN troops have clashed with peasants who have occupied land in rural towns in the North. In the northern city of Cap Haitien, peasants have occupied a tobacco plantation belonging to Komilfo, the state cigarette company. Land occupations by peasants have spread throughout the countryside, especially in the North where peasant resistance never ceased, even during the military junta.

Haiti's congested urban slum in Port-au-Prince, Cite Soleil, is also the site of clashes between the police backed by the occupation forces and protesting workers demanding jobs. Armed exchanges between the police and youth in Cite Soleil have led to reports of a "Red Army" operating in the underground.

Hence, we see that the very conditions bred by imperialism in Haiti are no less conditions in which revolt arises to transform them.

What workers are saying about

American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard

From an airport service worker
Memphis, Tennessee

"What Marx was talking about in the 19th century is so true today. He goes back to Africa and the idea of using Black skins for production, bringing them as slaves to America for cheap labor. He also saw how leaders can sell people out and how the struggle has to come from the people."

From a food processing plant worker
Indianola, Mississippi

"American Civilization on Trial shows Black masses in the vanguard in the 'unmasking of Western civilization's racism' and it shows how women have fought to have a voice. I learned about how Sojourner Truth, a great Black revolutionary, went about getting her name. And I learned about how Maria Stewart in 1831 told Black women to 'wake up!' She looked at all of that cooking we did and said we are capable of more than that."

To order, see lit ad, page 7.

Clinton-Congress showdown exposes ailing state of the union

(continued from page 1)

government shutdown all the more biting. As a sample of things to come, the two shutdowns idled 280,000 federal workers for four weeks in November, December and January and imposed hardships upon millions of Americans.

- After four residents died in a fire that swept through a low-income apartment building on Chicago's South Side, federal officials revealed that a follow-up inspection of prior safety violations had been postponed because of the shutdown.

- Transporting senior citizens to crucial medical treatments like kidney dialysis stopped, and Meals on Wheels deliveries for the elderly were jeopardized. The Social Security Administration stopped processing new eligibility applications.

- In the regions directly dependent upon federal administration—Native American lands under the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the District of Columbia—life came to a standstill. In Washington, garbage gathered on sidewalks, libraries remained locked, and public health clinics stayed closed.

- "We are more or less in a self-destructive path in neglecting the environment and human health," declared an official of the Environmental Protection Agency. In the Midwest alone, 36 asbestos evaluations in schools and restoration of 40 wetlands damaged by illegal dumping stopped.

And although the shutdown ended, atrophied departments and services are proving to be a condition rather than a momentary event. Only two-thirds of EPA's budget was restored. Head Start (which provides early education to children), the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department, and the Securities and Exchange Commission (which investigates crooked securities deals) were shortchanged. Ten programs were terminated, mostly in education. The Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services lost 25% of their funding from 1995 levels.

The shutdown also punctuated efforts to privatize government operations if not model them on private industry. "All the masks of civility have been taken off," a federal worker told N&L. "Managers are striking out against everyone who gets in their way, venting venom for all the years of having to put up with the federal workers union, affirmative action, you name it."

Furthermore, shrinking the federal payroll—by cutting 200,000 employees thanks to Vice President Gore's reinventing government—means slamming the door on minorities and women who had found relatively well-paying work and opportunities for advancement in government jobs. The same is true for the other 85% of government jobs at the state and local levels, many of which are supported by federal funding.

In heavily Black Wash., D.C., the government is the city's largest employer, giving a coloration to government that may well have surprised the ultra-conservative "freshmen" Representatives arriving there last winter. Pleased with the shrinkage of federal services and jobs, Texas Sen. Phil Gramm quipped, "Have you missed the government?" And when asked what an end to government would look like, Rep. Souder, one of those freshmen, shrugged, "We don't know or really care."

HEALTH PROFITS, BLOOD WAGES

Although only superficially, Clinton did manage to distinguish himself from the Republican Congress in the budget debate. Many people without secure incomes are painfully aware how woefully inadequate is health care. Medicare (government insurance for the elderly) already gives retirees paying 23% of their incomes for uncovered services. Medicaid (government insurance for the poor and disabled) is often little better than no insurance at all, and covers only 42% of the poor. Forty million people have no insurance, and the 28 million with private coverage are grossly underinsured.

In December, Clinton vetoed Republican cuts of \$270 billion from Medicare and \$163 billion from Medicaid. Republicans have pushed for higher costs for less care for the elderly and simply less care for the poor. Over the long haul, the medical institutions that care and advocate for the poor would wither, and the scope of for-profit medicine would widen.

However, as the Physicians for a National Health Program put it, "the Democrats launch verbal fire at Gingrich from a position mere inches to his left." His 1992 reform initiative, based on corporate-run health maintenance organizations, opened the floodgates to more than \$60 billion in mergers and acquisitions last year alone. Then at the end of 1995, he proposed Medicaid cuts of "only" \$54 billion, besides generous payments to HMOs and releasing them from patient care rules.

In reality, the fight is merely over "how much regulation to drop; whether the poor and elderly should suffer slightly or moderately; and whether inner-city hospitals could close sooner or later." ("U.S. Health Reform: Kindest Cuts," *The Nation*, Jan. 22, 1996.)

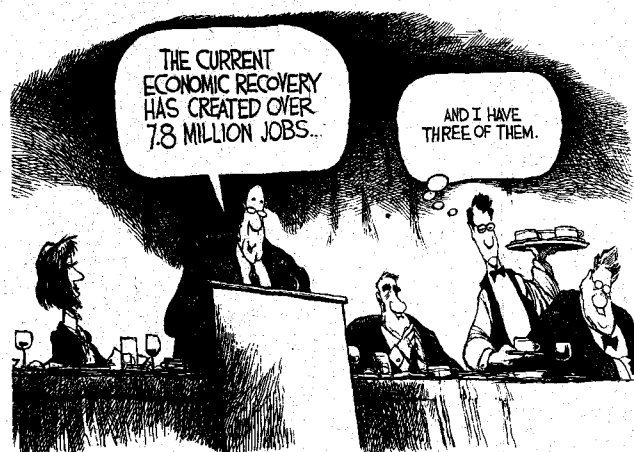
Another line drawn in the sand—raising the minimum wage—is Clinton deception. The minimum wage is worth less than 20 years ago, yet tens of millions of people working full time or stringing together two or three part-time jobs, earning the minimum wage. House Majority Leader Dick Armey wants to eliminate it. Given that it was an issue kept on the back-burner for three years, launching a campaign for it now, especially when that is its only possible fate, presents a gratuitous position intended only to make a pretense of dissimilarity in Congress.

government services that help workers are disappearing, the state is also growing in ways that discipline

labor. The White House abandoned the striker replacement bill, inspired legislation to undermine independent unions, stepped up deportations of undocumented workers, and sponsored laws to put a whole generation of youth in prisons.

Neither is the part of the state at the service of big business about to diminish. With anti-trust considerations waved by the Justice Department, never have so many and such large megamergers been consummated in the banking, health care, telecommunications, and defense industries. And the administration boasts of negotiating 80 international trade agreements.

Because they are vying for the minds of people, the Clinton Democrats and the Gingrich Republicans and even the moderates try to differentiate themselves from one another. Their common message is that the system



can work, but many doubt that it will—and for good reason.

AT&T announced 40,000 layoffs to open the new year, continuing the signature business trend of the 1990s. Cheap work is available though—rehired workers typically take a 20% pay cut. Often those benefit-less jobs are with contractors whose business shot up 50% over 1992 levels. Overall, in that time factory wages fell 2%, even as output rose by 14%.

A recent study of fast food workers in Harlem and Oakland further suggests why anger festers. The workers, most in their '20s, represent the majority of the urban poor, working at jobs that even on a full-time basis do not pay enough to adequately support a family, not for \$8,840 per year. Despite having training in inventory control, food preparation, and customer relations their slender hopes that better days are ahead are blunted by the prejudices of new employers. And better-educated, older men and women who once had better jobs compete for the same jobs.

A Black worker from the labor "War Zone" in Decatur, Ill., drew another picture of some awakening to the harsh realities of the '90s. "The older white workers in the union local thought what was happening to other workers was out there in the distance near the horizon," she explained to N&L. "They could not believe the cops

would pepper gas them. They finally got it! A lot of eyes opened. Whether they are ready to take the cops head on is another question. Newt and Clinton will push them more though. It doesn't matter what budget agreement they come up with."

VYING FOR MINDS

In response to such questioning, ruling ideologies often spin out their own solutions. The recent panacea on the Right for a so-called flat tax is one kind of bid for attention of the not-so-rich. The National Commission for Economic Growth and Tax Reform, headed by former Housing Secretary Jack Kemp, last month proposed a standard tax rate for all, and tax relief on dividends, interest, and capital gains, more prevalent among higher incomes.

Three of the Republican candidates for president, including multimillionaire Malcolm "Steve" Forbes Jr., are championing the flat tax, yet conservatives promoted it most when the stench of a \$245 billion straight tax cut for upper-income families became intolerable to everyone else. In truth, this supposedly fairer taxing scheme is simply a way to shift the balance of wealth in the U.S. even higher up socially. And the flat tax provisions for corporations would make labor far more costly and machines far cheaper.

Other, more captivating ideologies are ready to exploit the growing economic polarization that 15 years of Reaganomics has brought on. Among them is Patrick Buchanan who, though hardly calling for the emancipation of workers from the productive system of capitalism, mimics popular Left arguments. For example: "Free trade...pushes the antagonism of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie to the extreme breaking point." And: "The free-trade system hastens the social revolution."

He also calls Black immigrants "Zulus," considers Martin Luther King "a fraud" and maintains gays are "hell-bent on Satanism and suicide." Such a mix of racism and anti-establishment verbiage is something militias agree with. They in turn have found a hearing among some leftists allured by anti-establishment fervor.

Buchanan, who claims humble origins and to be untainted by financial interests, could well have been the type Daniel Guérin had in mind 60 years ago in *Fascism and Big Business*. "In all periods, the hostility of the middle classes towards big capital is accompanied by a tenacious attachment to the idea of the nation," he wrote. "When fascism proclaims itself anti-bourgeois...it has no intention of attacking the existing social order; rather it wants to rejuvenate that order by injecting fresh blood, plebeian [lowborn] blood."

The danger in all the professed "anti-establishment" programs we see arising in this time of deep economic crisis is that they can lead a significant number of those looking for a way out to a dead-end or even backward, instead. It is a time when what is needed to combat the profound ideological pollution is a profound philosophy of revolution to serve as the rudder to steer through the coming struggles.

VOICES FROM WITHIN THE PRISON WALLS

by Carl Moss



The mission statement of most prisons contains the rhetoric of rehabilitation. Yet the rate of recidivism tells us that as many as 63% of the people that pass through these steel doors are on their second, third and fourth convictions. This simply means the state's department of "Corrections" is not living up to its mission statement's central theme and that the various programs that have proven to be effective in other jurisdictions in the reduction of recidivism are just not being used properly in Illinois. If the recidivism rates realized by the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) were applied as a cure for a disease, the efficacy rate would indicate failure. The recent enactment of the "three strikes" legislation that mandates natural life for recidivists is an example of the failure of the self-perpetuating policies of the various correction departments.

"As an institution, our penal and 'correctional' system is an abject failure. The conditions in America's jails and prisons virtually ensure psychological impairment and physical deterioration for the thousands of men and women forced to live there.¹ Reformation and rehabilitation is the rhetoric: systematic dehumanization is the reality. Public attention is directed only sporadically towards the subhuman conditions that prevail in these institutions, and usually only because prisoners, themselves, have risked many more years in confinement, and in some cases even their lives, to dramatize their situation by protest.

"The current rate of increase of over 10% per annum represents a prison space demand of about 1,000 new beds per week, far in excess of the new beds being supplied. Thus, in looking at the impact of litigation on conditions of confinement, we might ask: in light of this enormous population increase, what might conditions be today without the litigation of the past decade? The answer would be something out of Dante's *Inferno*."²

More released prisoners return to the IDOC than are

The cancer of corrections

successful upon release. There is no "correction" or even the vaguest suggestion that marketable job skills were learned, or even offered. The IDOC has failed to fulfill its mission statement and the good citizen tax-payers just keep allowing the cancer to grow with impunity.

What possible option does a released prisoner have to returning to a life of crime? The state has not prepared them with a work ethic or any job skill that could be marketed anywhere but another prison. All most prisoners leave with is the survival skills learned while in prison and a number of new ways to commit crime. To add further insult to the profound injury of incarceration, the IDOC gives a released prisoner a bus ticket home and \$50 to start a new life. Good luck!

The recidivism rate for the IDOC is between 43% and 63%, depending on which source is selected for the numbers. In this maximum-punishment facility recidivism is substantially higher than this. (I use the term "Maximum-Punishment" instead of maximum-security because security in here is a joke and only the levels of deprivation and punishment are "maxed-out.")

This place is full of stories of men that have only been able to enjoy their freedom for a few frantic hours before committing another crime. A few last for as long as it takes them to spend the \$50 that they were given when they cleared the gate. Less than half of those released are successful (non-recidivists) upon release. For the most part these men and women had strong family support systems waiting for them and sufficient community (and family) resources to assist them through the transition from savage survival instinct living to respect and consideration. If the IDOC had done the job they are employed to do, and that is expressly worded in their mission statement, the tragedy of recidivism would not be so painfully real.

Pointing fingers at the problem is relatively easy. The difficulty comes when one attempts to suggest solutions to, or to provide details for, the reasons for the corruption. To do this with any meaning for the free-world reader, the entire process needs to be examined. The light of public scrutiny needs to illuminate this can of worms to end the masquerade.

"The Cancer of Corrections" continues next month

Number of prisoners in U.S.A. February 1996

1, 1 4 4, 9 3 8

BY D.A.

1. See, *Pugh v Locke*, 406 F Supp. 318 (M.D. Ala. 1976); *Ramos v Lamm*, 485 F. Supp. 122 (D.Colo. 1979); *Palmigiano v Garrahy*, 443 F Supp. 956 (D.R.I. 1977)
2. *The Rights Of Prisoners*, Fourth Edition

The philosophic meaning of Bosnia's struggle

(continued from page 5)

ss in dialectics in order to understand the life and death issues of multiculturalism and the struggle against "ethnic cleansing." Both Karahasan and Khan are searching for a philosophic conception in which the relation of the self to "the Other" is characterized by mutual recognition. Khan argues that Hegelian dialectics is inherently about recognition. Karahasan, however, believes that Hegelian dialectics is about the domination of "the Other" and the rejection of recognition.

We need to look at Hegel himself to depict the importance of these issues. One place to examine Hegel's treatment of identity and difference is the "Doctrine of Essence" in his *Science of Logic*.² At stake in this section is Hegel's challenge to "external reflection" and the "abstraction" which holds identity and difference apart from each other. Hegel writes, "The Notion of identity is simple self-related negativity...whereas on the contrary that identity that is aloof from difference, and difference that is aloof from identity are products of external reflection and abstraction which arbitrarily clings to this point of indifferent difference."

For Hegel "truth is complete only in the unity of identity with difference." Which is why Hegel moves from a critique of "abstract identity" to a critique of the category of "diversity." Hegel is critical of the category of "diversity" because in it the moments of identity and difference are "indifferent to one another." This relationship of "mutual indifference" is at the same time a transition

from diversity to "polar opposition" and finally to "contradiction." For Hegel contradiction is "the root of all movement and life."

According to the noted Hegel scholar, J.N. Findlay, "Hegel's real motive in passing from mere Diversity to Polar Opposition lies in his dissatisfaction with connections that do not delve deep into the nature of their terms, which depend upon arbitrary external points of view which are not in the last resort real connections at all...Against this the aim of philosophy is to banish indifference and to recognize the necessity of things."³

This critique of diversity raises a very important question about Bosnia. Was Bosnian multiculturalism a unity of people of different cultures who simply lived in a pluralistic society in which the relations between the various peoples were external and characterized by indifference? Or was it characterized by deeper connections between the different cultures? Dzevad Karahasan refers to Bosnia's multiculturalism as a pluralism, but his testimony about the deep and inseparable connections between people of diverse cultures gives us a very different picture. Hegel's critique of diversity goes beyond simple pluralism and thereby sheds illumination on the very unique character of multiculturalism in Bosnia.

However, in order to further explore Hegel's treatment of identity, difference and otherness, we need to look at how he develops them in the final chapter of his *Science of Logic*, the "Absolute Idea." Here Hegel distinguishes his concept of dialectics from formal logic, by

taking up the way in which the contradiction between a universal first and its Other is transcended. He emphasizes that in dialectics, the Other is not just the negation of the first term that it is an Other of. It includes the first term and is a further development of it.

Furthermore, he emphasizes that the contradiction between the first term and the Other is not transcended through a synthesis in which the contradictory determinations lie side by side. "[F]ormal thinking makes identity its law, and allows the contradictory content before it to sink into ordinary conception, into space and time, in which the contradictories are held asunder in juxtaposition and temporal succession and so come before consciousness without reciprocal contact." (p. 835) Dialectical cognition however thinks through the contradiction. Hegel's emphasis here is on the concept of "absolute negativity," a deeper development of the idea of freedom through its confrontation with contradiction, otherness, difference, and the creation of a newer, deeper and more differentiated idea of freedom.

It is precisely this concept of absolute negativity which Marx praised in his 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" as the "moving and creating principle." Marx wrote: "Hegel comprehends the self-production of the human being as a process, regards objectification as contra-position, as externalization and as the transcendence of this externalization...The true, active relating of the human being to himself as species-essence, that is as human essence, is possible only because the human being actually produces all the capacities of his species—and this again is only possible thanks to the collective activity of human beings, is possible only as a result of history."⁴

Marx argued further that once the Hegelian dialectic is freed of its abstract character, the revolutionary kernel of absolute negativity could be released as the idea of a "new Humanism," the idea of a total uprooting of this racist, sexist, class divided society.

Marx's reappropriation of the Hegelian dialectic of "absolute negativity" was reinterpreted by Marxist-Humanism in the post-World War II period not as an idea of synthesis or as a drive for the domination of the Other but as the development of a philosophy of revolution on the basis of the new challenges that multiple subjectivities from peoples of color to women's liberation have issued to the idea of revolutionary transformation.

This concept of the dialectics of negativity speaks directly to Karahasan's and Khan's search for a philosophic conception in which difference and Otherness are not subsumed under the category of identity. It also challenges conceptions which limit multiculturalism to pluralism within the confines of the existing alienated capitalist, racist, sexist and homophobic society.

The heroic struggle for the preservation of a multicultural society in Bosnia over the past four years, demonstrated in a unique way the kind of existence in which difference and otherness is not treated with hostility, or indifference. Instead it represented the enrichment of various cultures in their interactions, and the development of a new identity which was not defined in chauvinistic nationalist terms. The idea implicit in that struggle demands to be developed even as we witness its tragic destruction in Bosnia.

In an age when capitalism is making every effort to divert attention from its deep crises by making our consciousness define life along the contours of racism, ethnic hatred, misogyny and homophobia, the idea raised by the Bosnian struggle is a serious challenge to the system.

The majority of the Left did its best to aid the western powers in suffocating this liberation struggle and in branding it a narrow nationalist movement. As against that, responsibility for reconstituting a humanist Marxism is inextricably tied to solidarity with Bosnia.

Our responsibility to Bosnia demands recalling Karl Marx's response to the Paris Commune of 1871. He exuberantly solidarized with it during its brief existence and did not consider it dead even after the French army crushed the Commune by slaughtering 30,000 Communards, and sending many more into exile. He instead wrote about the challenge of the Paris Commune and developed its idea of "freely associated labor" in the French edition of *Capital* (1872-75).

Today, the struggle against the globalization of "ethnic cleansing" and narrow nationalism demands the articulation of a philosophic concept that can not only comprehend what was new in Bosnia's struggle for multiculturalism, but develop its revolutionary implications further.

4. Raya Dunayevskaya, *Marxism and Freedom* (New York: Bookman, 1958), p.309

2. G.W.F. Hegel, *Science of Logic* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1976)

3. J.N. Findlay, *Hegel: A Re-examination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), p.192.

View from 'The Other Israel'

Editor's note: We received the following letter from Adam Keller, editor of The Other Israel and longtime Israeli peace activist, in response to the lead article by Peter Wermuth on "Rabin's assassination lifts veil on emerging ethnic apartheid" in our December 1995 issue.

Your article is well-written and shows much familiarity with the Israeli situation and the positions of left-wing groups here. Nevertheless, there are several important comments I would like to make.

Nowhere does your article mention the fact that the two Oslo agreements so far signed are interim agreements, valid for a maximum of five years, and that negotiations on the definite status of the territories are due to open in May 1996 and conclude in May 1999. Certainly, powerful forces inside the Israeli establishment would like to see these negotiations end with "a Palestinian entity which is less than a state" or with a Palestinian state within very limited borders, far less than the 1967 borders. Yet before the Intifada and the upheaval it caused inside Israeli society, the Israeli establishment did not intend to give the Palestinians what they got now, either.

Though the state of Israel has enormous military, political and economic advantage over the Palestinians, their very weakness gives them one enormous advantage: in popular motivation. Practically all Palestinians want to have complete independence, and very many of them are willing to make enormous sacrifices to gain that independence. On the other hand, only a dwindling minority of Israelis are willing to make any serious sacrifice in order to deny the Palestinians the right to have their own state.

This leaves the settlers and the extreme Right, which try to revive the idealism of the early Zionist pioneers, increasingly isolated and cut off from the mainstream of Israeli society. Indeed, the settlers themselves—who are far from being a homogenous mass—are increasingly feeling this, and they have intensive debates among themselves, with some wishing to get government compensations and leave the territories while others start talking of making their own compromise with the Palestinians (though the proposals made so far by some settler leaders fall far short of what the Palestinians can

live with).

Altogether, I feel that a blanket condemnation of Oslo is wrong. The agreements contain the potential both for a truly independent Palestinian state and for a more sophisticated perpetuation of the Israeli domination; which it will finally be depends to great degree on the struggle, both by the Palestinians themselves and by peace forces in Israel and internationally.

Among other things, should the Israeli position at some stage prove manifestly intransigent, the Palestinians have the option of declaring unilateral independence. Such a move will undoubtedly have massive popular support from across the Palestinian political spectrum, and—if the timing is chosen carefully—could get widespread international diplomatic recognition, for example from the European Community. After all, the basic criteria in International Law for recognizing a state is effective control of a territory, and now the Palestinians have this to a considerable degree (certainly much more than, for example, the Lithuanians had when they declared independence from the Soviet Union).

Outside critics of Oslo should also take notice of the enormous enthusiasm displayed by the Palestinian masses at every town evacuated by the Israeli army, manifested in enormous rallies of welcome to Arafat. It would hardly be possible to fake such massive enthusiasm. The Palestinians are well aware of the limited and partial nature of what they gained—but nevertheless most of them regard these as very real and tangible achievements, the first concrete results of all the suffering and sacrifices of the Intifada.

On the Israeli side you mentioned the peace demonstrations and rallies—but made no specific mention of the thousands of youths who sat for a whole week around lighted candles at the scene of the assassination and in other public places. In my view, the most significant feature of this phenomenon is precisely the fact that many of them had not been involved in politics before, and that it was a very genuine upswelling from below, not politically articulated with clear programs but nevertheless with a strong commitment to the idea of peace. "Rabin dreamed of peace and we will make his dream come true," in the words of the graffiti scrawled on the Tel-Aviv Town Hall, near the scene of the murder. Whatever Rabin may have been in life, the myth created around him is the myth of a martyred peacemaker, which is an enormous asset to the peace movement.

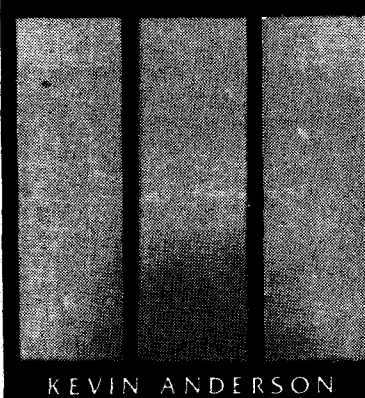
As to what Rabin really was, I would like to refer to one point you mention very briefly: Rabin was the very first Israeli Prime Minister willing to rely for his majority on Arab Members of the Israeli Parliament. This was, in my view, an action far more radical than shaking Arafat's hand, since it broke a firm taboo which all previous governments (and Rabin himself in his earlier career) adhered to: an Israeli government must have not only a majority among all Israelis but also and especially among Jewish Israelis.

One more remark: Arafat is far from being a democrat and occasionally does not scruple to resort to various acts violating human rights. Nevertheless, Palestinian political life is far more pluralistic than in most other Arab societies, and substantial forces among the Palestinians want their state to be truly democratic; and Arafat's own inclination is to try to reach a consensus, rather than to try to break his opponents by brute force. He is very unlikely, for example, to adopt the kind of attitude taken by the Algerian establishment which led to the civil war there. In any case, it is misleading to write about the size of the Palestinian Police to the population. Most of it is in fact the Palestinian army, which is not allowed to be called that by Israel but in fact has military structures and tasks. The genuine policemen are only a small part of it.

—Adam Keller

Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism

A CRITICAL STUDY



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But the speakers also eloquently addressed the larger issues at stake; in the works of Maria Gema Suarez, "Society diminishes itself when it dehumanizes students." She recounted a story of one student who went on to be a doctor and asked, "What would have been gained by denying her the ability to help people?" Alberto Verduzco added, "Universities should be universal. They should not create more barriers for the purpose of increasing revenue."

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The December legislative elections and the January hostage situation near Chechnya each constituted further humiliations for the battered Yeltsin regime.

On Jan. 23, as we went to press, Chechen commandos finally released the remaining civilian hostages from their cross-border raid, but still kept 14 Russian police as prisoners. This incident began on Jan. 9 when a small group of Chechens seized 2,000 hostages in neighboring Dagestan, and then fled with 130 hostages. Russian troops and members of the Federal Security Services (FSS, the former KGB) surrounded them. After a week, claiming falsely that the hostages had been killed, they used artillery and missiles to flatten the place.

Despite this, and a siege by thousands of troops, many of the Chechens and their commander managed to flee across the border with 46 of the hostages. During the siege, another group of Chechens briefly seized a Russia-bound ferry in a Turkish port, an incident which showed their growing support in Turkey and other surrounding Muslim countries.

In the village siege, it seems that, while willing to shell from afar, few if any Russian troops or FSS men were ready to die for Yeltsin by actually engaging the enemy on the ground. How else could so many Chechen fighters, plus hostages, have gotten through thousands of "crack" troops? Later, Russian troops complained to the

Chinese migrants exploited

The anger of Chinese migrant workers erupted late last year in the town of Longgang, in the Shenzhen "free enterprise zone" only 20 miles from the Hong Kong border. Reportedly, the workers attacked a local man who drove a motorbike onto the road they were paving.

The confrontation exploded when locals came to help the man and fought with the road workers. After local police were summoned and opened fire on the workers, widespread fighting broke out and the migrant workers trashed the local Communist Party headquarters. Witnesses reported that police went "crazy," even firing into a pond where workers had leaped to escape.

At least four people were killed from gunshot wounds and many more were injured from beatings. Migrants claimed that two workers died because the local hospital would not admit them without an upfront cash deposit of several thousand dollars.

Migrant workers who are peasants driven into the urban areas and industrial zones often make less than \$1 a day. This exploitation has been magnified in the premier "free enterprise zone" of Shenzhen and has intensified the tensions between locals and migrants. While the largest siphons of surplus value continue to be international and native Chinese capitalists, many Shenzhen locals have joined in exploiting the huge migrant labor force in small farms and sweatshops.

There are an estimated 12 million migrant workers now living in Guangdong province alone, and they have contributed the large part of labor to help feed China's capitalist "growth" spurt. But as one migrant said after the Longgang battle, "In the eyes of the police, we are worse than dogs." Migrants have no resident status and have to carry at least three identity cards all the time, much like the hated "pass" system that once operated in apartheid South Africa.

Deepening crisis in Yeltsin's Russia

press bitterly that they had not been given sleeping bags, food, or water. No transportation was even provided for the elite "Alpha" anti-terrorist unit, whose members had to pay their own train fare home!

Anger toward Yeltsin was also evident in December, when the pro-Yeltsin Our Home Is Russia Party received under 10% of the vote. Communists and other right-wing nationalists will now dominate the parliament.

Protest in Israel



Police attacked thousands of Ethiopian Jews demonstrating outside the Israeli Prime Minister's office in Jerusalem, Jan. 28. The protesters denounced as racist the government policy of destroying blood donated by Ethiopians under the pretense of a high rate of HIV infection. "We won't be silent anymore," said one youth.

Farrakhan and the Sudan

For decades, a series of northern and Muslim-dominated Sudanese governments, most of them military dictatorships, have sought at all costs to conquer and even destroy the non-Muslim Black population of the South.

By 1996, over one million people have been killed, millions more forced into exile, and thousands captured, raped and sold into slavery. While most of these enslaved Blacks have been sold to northern Sudanese, according to *Le Monde*, others have been sold abroad as well, in Libya and the sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf.

While earlier northern-based regimes did enjoy U.S. support and aid, the current Sudanese regime of General Omar Hassan al-Bashir has close ties to Iran and to a local cleric, the world famous Islamic fundamentalist theologian Hassan al-Turabi.

Recently, some of this has received renewed attention in the U.S. through Samuel Cotton's series of articles on "Arab Masters/Black Slaves" in New York's *Blackweek*, the *City Sun*, and Nat Hentoff's articles this winter in the *Village Voice*.

These articles have also exposed Sudan's links to Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam (NOI). Farrakhan has visited the Sudan as an honored guest and his newspaper, *The Final Call*, has argued that accounts of genocide and slavery in the Sudan are part of a "big lie" and are "a manipulative device to divide the Black and Arab people in America and on the African continent." Predictably, NOI official Akbar Mohammed has called the attacks on the Sudanese regime part of a "Jewish conspiracy to divide Black Americans and attack Islam."

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as American Civilization on Trial concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her recreation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

Gennadi Zyuganov's Communists placed first, with 15 seats, triple those of Yeltsin's party.

Zyuganov is a sinister character who admires the present regime in China. A former professor of Marxist-Leninist "philosophy," i.e. a party ideologist, he opposes the Gorbachev reforms. After 1991, he became part of the anti-Semitic nationalist milieu, and today his rhetoric combines that with traditional Stalinist ideology. Also waiting in the wings is former General Alesandr Lebed, who has expressed open admiration for Pinochet's Chile. The neo-fascist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy is also still around but with a bit less support than last year.

If the Yeltsin regime collapses or is defeated in the June elections, there is danger of the coming to power of a "Red-Brown" alliance based on people such as Zyuganov, Lebed, and Zhirinovskiy (see "The Looming Threat of a 'Red-Brown' Alliance" by our Czech correspondent, Stephen Steiger, N&L, December 1995). These groups oppose Russia's "free market" reform and want to return to some type of anti-Western stance. As a former military officer told the *New York Times* "this ridiculous romance with America that began a few years ago has not been good for us."

That sentiment is why the U.S. and Europe are clinging to Yeltsin despite his massacre of 30,000 people in Chechnya. Some are even hoping that he will cancel the June elections on the pretext of "security" versus Chechen terrorism, or steal them—in short, a solution similar to the Mubarak regime in Egypt. But Mubarak is rooted in the army, a large, well-organized nationwide institution. Since the collapse of the Communist Party in 1991, Russia has had no such unifying institution upon which even a dictatorship could lean. Yeltsin and the Red-Brown elements are each trying to create one, however. Without a strong leftist opposition to Yeltsin or his opponents, the situation looks bleak for 1996.

Voting in Guatemala

In the final round of Guatemala presidential voting January, Alvaro Arzu narrowly won. He is a promoter of increased capitalist production and export as the way out of the nation's ills. Arzu was elected by a hair over Alfonso Portillo, puppet candidate whose strings are pulled by the notorious former dictator Gen. Rios Montt.

The final balloting was very light, with nearly two thirds of Guatemalans who were registered deciding there was no reason to vote. Actual power in Guatemala still remains in the hands of the military.

While the elections mean nothing in terms of genuine change, it is important that several candidates of the left New Guatemala Democratic Front (FDNG) won seats for the next congress. The left has not openly participated since Jacobo Arbenz was overthrown by the CIA-orchestrated coup in 1954.

The FDNG winners include three women who came out of the 1980's struggle against repression: Nine Montenegro who is head of the Mutual Support Group (GAM) of relatives and friends of those assassinated death squads; Rosalina Tuyuc, an indigenous woman who organized the Confederation of Guatemalan Widows (CONAVIGUA) whose focus is peasant women; and a Manuela Alvarado, an indigenous woman and human rights activist. The women have no illusions about what can be changed through "congress," but state they will speak out for indigenous rights, an end to "impunity for military criminals, and serious negotiations with the guerrilla liberation movement."

French strikes

(continued from page 1)

ing to the Trotskyist paper *Lutte Ouvriere* a day after the strikes began, up to 40,000 demonstrated in Paris for women's rights. A delegation of 140 women from Marseilles, with paid up train tickets for Paris, were denied their legal right to alternate transit by air during the strike by railroad management. The women protested inside the station all day, later joining the workers occupying it, and holding meetings where each group pressed solidarity with the other.

To many of the workers, the strike was about more than maintaining wages and benefits. At the Gare du Nord, a major Paris railroad station, general assemblies of strikers were of all crafts together in one hall, not as in strikes in 1986, in separate areas. One worker there told *Le Monde* that theirs was part of a long struggle, back to the big strikes of 1936 and 1948. "Then, when my grandfather blocked the tracks of the station, they shot people. As for me, I'm prepared to the distance. They won't uproot me from here." Another worker at the Gare d'Austerlitz described his sadness passing homeless workers every day: "We can't act this. We railway workers have never wanted to create a little Eden cut off from the private sector for ourselves. We are giving voice also to those who can't go out." Another worker, a woman, added that if the cutbacks continued, "we'll be like in the private sector, with precarious jobs. I dream of a mini-revolution."

This was the greatest labor upheaval since 1968, terms of the sacrifices required for a month-long strike, it should be noted that, unlike unionized American and German workers, French workers do not receive strike funds from their unions. On the other hand, in France the right to strike is constitutionally guaranteed. While, in this period of retrogression, it is not surprising that the strikes assumed a generally defensive character, they showed as well a yearning to go beyond the limits of the present social order.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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25¢

Long nights feed capital's vampire thirst



by John Marcotte

When I went from evenings to midnights, I figure I went from sleeping 38 hours in five days to about 24 hours in those five days. I guess that's considered a lot of sleep in the trucking industry anyway. I'm on days now and I just worked 28 hours in two days, 49 hours in the last four. That's nothing for over-the-road drivers. They get paid pennies on the mile. They basically work night and day when they're on the road, which is weeks at a time. They get by on naps and a couple hours of sleep here and there.

I guess we're not supposed to complain about night work and the long hours. It seems to me it's taken for granted that that's the way the industry has to be. When I used to say I needed my eight hours sleep everyone thought that was really funny.

This is not just a problem in trucking. I read with great interest the Staley worker's story in the October N&L about how night work is detrimental to your health. You don't realize that when you're doing it. You're running on nervous energy and you feel you're doing all right. Years down the road it takes its toll. Like one over-the-road driver told me, those long hours "make you old fast."

Twelve-hour shifts that rotate between days and nights were major issues in some of the hardest fought labor battles of this decade, like at Staley and Bridge-stone-Firestone. Excessive overtime was the cause of strikes this year at GM. This is happening everywhere. I don't recognize the garment industry in NYC anymore. When I worked there in the 1970s, a 35½-hour week was the standard set by the unionized shops. Now, immigrant workers I know work ten hours or more a day, and the standard workweek is six days, even seven. This is the norm that cannot be questioned. Besides, the workers say they need the hours—their real wages have fallen so low, they'd die on 35½ hours a week.

What has changed in capitalism, where is the "progress" in our society, since the days of Karl Marx, when he wrote *Capital* in 1867? Nothing—not a damn thing. Listen to his explanation, 129 years ago, of the conditions we are living today:

"Constant capital, the means of production [whether a truck or a sewing machine]...only exist to absorb labour, and with every drop of labour a proportional quantity of surplus-labour. While they fail to do this [when the truck or machine lies idle], their mere existence causes a relative loss to the capitalist....The prolongation of the working day beyond the limits of the natural day, into the night, only acts as a palliative. It quenches only in a

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

Black World will return
next month.

—Lou
Turner



Zaire in the grip of Africa's greatest post-colonial crisis

by Lou Turner

A complex logic of genocide, refugee catastrophe, ethnic terror, war and repatriation, western imperialist maneuvering, and the historical ramifications of failed revolution has plunged Africa into its greatest post-colonial crisis. At the heart of it is the imminent pulling apart of Zaire, the most mineral-rich country in the world, and the ailing autocratic figure of its west-ern-backed, counter-revolutionary dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko.

In a little more than six weeks after the fighting broke out that precipitated the present crisis, one-fourth of Zaire is in the hands of a coalition of rebel forces, the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire. The Alliance is made up primarily of the Banyamulenge and Banyarwanda (Zairean ethnic Tutsis who speak the languages of Burundi and Rwanda, respectively), joined by other ethnic groups like the Nande and Hunde, as well as four political parties, all opposed to Mobutu's regime. By the second week in December, they stand poised to take over the country's second most important city, the port center of Kisangani on the Zaire River.

The present crisis began Oct. 13 when the well-armed Alliance of Democratic Forces, under the leadership of Laurent Kabila, attacked Zairean army outposts and the Rwandan Hutu refugee camps at Bukavu and Goma. The camps were controlled by the former Rwandan Army (FAR) and the Interahamwe, the Hutu militias who perpetrated the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and then fled under the cover of the refugee exodus to eastern



Rebel of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire at mass meeting in Bukavu, eastern Zaire, after rebel take-over in early November.

Zaire after being defeated by the Tutsi-led Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF). Gerard Prunier, the French diplomat who oversaw the French intervention in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide which helped facilitate the escape of the Hutu *genocidaire*, has presented plans to the Chirac government to once again intervene.

Supported by French, British, South African, and Chinese arms, international food and medical aid, and Zairean military assistance, the FAR and Interahamwe regularly struck Rwandan villages and RPF positions. Whereupon the RPF Army responded with its own cross-border attacks. Once this cycle of cross-border incursions destabilized the entire Great Lakes region, the stage was

(Continued on page 9)

Black outrage over murder in the Delta

Leland, Miss.—On the evening of Oct. 17, Aaron White, a young 29-year-old TV repairman and father of two small children, was murdered. Initially, it was alleged that he was involved in a traffic accident, then that he was involved in a shootout with police, and then that he died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. He was licensed to carry a firearm.

Other factors, however, led the community to doubt that his wounds were self-inflicted. Aaron was found in the more affluent part of town and was supposed to have driven into a tree. His truck was so totally demolished, we don't know how he was supposed to have gotten out of it alive, let alone run from police, hide behind some bushes and then shoot himself in the right side of the head though he was left-handed.

The night he was killed they didn't allow any of his family to identify his body. And instead of having either of Washington County's two Black coroners perform the autopsy on his body, the police called in a white coroner from 25 miles away. Given these and a number of other factors surrounding his death that point to foul play, the Black community wants someone to be held accountable and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. We will not accept anything less.

After consulting with Aaron's family, I called together a rally outside his TV repair shop on Oct. 26 to voice the community's concerns and demand answers to all the discrepancies in the police and coroner's reports. Some 400 to 500 people turned out.

Aaron was buried the following day, Oct. 27. His mother was still not allowed to see his body at the funeral home until just two hours before the funeral, and then it wasn't his whole body she was allowed to see, only his upper body. People suspect that he may have been castrated, like a Black man had been some years ago in Leland.

We then called a community meeting at Leland High School on Oct. 30 where 600 to 700 people attended, and invited town officials to come and explain the situation to us. None of them showed up. We were so insulted, that some youth broke a few windows of white owned businesses when they left the meeting. The next day, Halloween, Leland was put under a 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew enforced by 90 state highway patrolmen in full riot gear.

The curfew lasted for two days and led to the arrest of nearly 40 Black people. The biased enforcement of the curfew can be seen in the fact that though it was Halloween, white children were allowed to trick-or-treat and white owned businesses were allowed to stay open, but Black children and Black owned businesses were not.

On Nov. 1, we asked the U.S. Justice Dept. to get involved and asked again to meet with town officials. The next day, Nov. 2, we had a meeting at City Hall with Mayor Sam Thomas, State Representative Jimmy Thornton, Police Chief Mike Dees, local Black ministers and the two Black county coroners, George Hampton and Lisa Frye. At that meeting they agreed to lift the curfew, and the mayor apologized for calling Black Leland residents "crack heads."

Since the U.S. Justice Dept. began its investigation of the circumstances surrounding Aaron's death, town officials, especially Dees and other police officers, have tried to submit their resignations. The Justice Dept. refused to accept them, until Dec. 6 when Dees was allowed to resign. Dees has even put his house up for sale.

Leland is 65% Black but is sewed up by the white power structure. The Black community believes that Aaron White was murdered by a white, drug-dealing, corrupt police officer (not the one the police claim may have shot him). The policeman we believe murdered Aaron is known to confiscate drugs and property, and re-sell them on the street. Black officials and police officers may also know what actually happened to Aaron.

What town officials fear is that an investigation will dig up the real corruption in Leland and the backlog of Black people who have been unlawfully imprisoned. They also didn't dream that the people's outrage and persistence would go this far. The next step is the Justice Dept. report—we will see where we will go from there.

—Perry Dixon,
community activist

SPECIAL FEATURE ON THE NEW EDITION OF

Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution:

Reaching for the Future

by RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

Marxist-
Humanist
Archives •

Unchaining
the power
of negativ-
ity
..... page 4

Preface and
contents to
the 1996
Wayne State
University
edition
..... page 4

Dialogue •

'Women's
Liberation
and Dialectics of
Revolution'
today
..... page 5

ON THE INSIDE

Editorial • Racism inside Texaco, sexism
inside the Army page 10
Revolutionary lives celebrated •
Meridel LeSueur page 2
Mario Savio page 11

New 'reforms' assault battered women

by Anna Maillon

Los Angeles—Those of us who work in programs assisting survivors of domestic violence are angry and worried about the implications of the new welfare "reform" for battered women. Designed presumably to reduce families' dependency on government assistance, it will in many cases increase women's dependency on men. These new measures prevent the autonomy of poor women and affect immigrant women the most.

Studies show 50-75% of women applying for government assistance are in or have been in abusive relationships. Teen mothers I work with often have been sexually abused; new requirements will push them to marry

Woman as Reason

their abusers. It will be harder for battered women and children to "disappear" to shelters from dangerous situations because stricter disclosure requirements will likely cause ongoing contact with the children's fathers once their names are revealed.

Most of the women who come to the shelter here use the welfare system as part of their empowerment in escaping a dependent relationship with a dangerous man. Because of increased public attention to domestic violence, programs like ours continue to receive some government funding. But our work seems futile when women who want to leave potentially fatal situations feel forced to remain with or return to partners whose income may keep the family from hunger and homelessness. If they come to our shelter, they can only stay about a month, after which the plan is for them to be self-sufficient.

NEW REFORMS INTENSIFY HARDSHIP

After completing her stay in our shelter, our client M. could not get AFDC for herself or her oldest child, who was born in Mexico, but she received assistance for the two youngest. She worked in a fish cannery seasonally and part-time at a bar. But when the gas bill was due, she had to call around to friends for help with food. She managed to stay away from her violent husband for over two years. Then the welfare system caught up with him for child support and he demanded to see the kids. He convinced her that her life would be easier if she returned.

Based on nationwide averages, minimum wage working women make \$8,840 annually; basic yearly expenses for a family of three amount to \$22,000. A woman on welfare with two children receives \$5,040 per year, not including food stamps. Now "Aid for Families with Dependent Children" (AFDC) will be reduced to "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families" (TANF). States are no longer required to provide assistance to eligible families but can design their own welfare programs. The federal government provides strict penalties for states that are overly generous.

The basis for the "Personal Responsibility and Work

Opportunity Act" is that welfare perpetuates dependency, undermines the "work ethic," encourages unmarried teens to have children and increases taxes. However, an October 1996 *Scientific American* article points out that most poor and homeless women use welfare for short periods; that many mothers on AFDC supplement their grants with low paying jobs with no benefits; that only 7.6% of mothers on AFDC in 1993 were under 18 and unmarried; and that AFDC recipients make up less than 5% of "entitlement" spending and less than 3% of the total federal outlay.

The following groups are now ineligible for assistance: families who have received assistance for five years; pregnant women, until the birth of a child; most legal immigrant residents (undocumented immigrants have never been eligible). Women who do not provide names and whereabouts of their children's fathers may be denied TANF.

WOMEN'S INDEPENDENCE ATTACKED

The women and children I work with suffer physical and emotional symptoms originally identified in prisoners of war and other war veterans. Yet they are creative and courageous, and make good use of the support they get from staff and one another. Many leave jobs as well as homes and expect to work again once stabilized.

There is a 19-year-old Mexican woman in our shelter with three children. After years of sexual, emotional and physical abuse, she decided to leave her 30-year-old husband. She is on AFDC for the first time and expresses both shame for taking "charity" and despair over the tiny amount granted to her. Since she is undocumented only her children are eligible.

She does not believe she will be able to provide enough food for her children when living on her own. She has thought of suicide but would not want to hurt the children. She and two other shelter residents agreed that prostitution looks like the only option, "maybe just in emergencies, but it would be better than living with him again." Another resident, who is documented but not a citizen, told me her grant will be reduced by almost \$200 per month once the welfare reforms go into effect.

This capitalist system presumably applauds people for being independent and demanding and using all available resources to advantage. But women trying to be safe are treated like idiots and parasites. Welfare "reform" points poor mothers back into the hands of men with serious problems. It joins together with the general social and religious insistence on women trusting and supporting their men, "in kindness and in cruelty."

Women in Prison network

Pasadena, Cal.—In October, the National Network for Women in Prison held the first ever leadership training session for formerly incarcerated women. About 20 women from all over the U.S. participated in a two-day class series on becoming advocates and organizers for women prisoners.

I came away with an understanding that change can happen; it is a lot of work, but we can make a difference. We all share a commitment and passion for this work. I was caught by a revolutionary feeling among the formerly incarcerated women ready to speak out and fight back.

The Leadership Conference was followed by the 8th National Roundtable on Women in Prison, the largest gathering of formerly incarcerated women in the U.S. It also attracted some of the still-human members of the California Department of Corrections (CDC).

In a workshop on women who killed their abusers, I found out how insidious racism is. I personally know six women who killed their batterers. They are all doing life, and they are all white. There is a theory that judges identify with the white male victims and give white women very harsh sentences. However, the same judges don't find killing a Black man such a harshly punishable offense.

I had a problem with the designation "battered women's syndrome." I hope it helps women get lighter sentences for fighting back. But it labels women who fight abuse as "sick." It should be the other way around—the sickness is not fighting back when you're battered.

I did not care for the workshop called "lesbian prisoners." I felt this was a misnomer. The workshop brought out how heterosexism is played out in an all-woman environment: the stables of women, the obvious sex roles and so on. Then a woman minister spoke about the evil of lesbianism. A more appropriate name for this workshop would have been "chauvinism in prison."

There is a deceptive idea that California is very progressive. I learned that California is very archaic and punitive. Women who spent time in New York and Texas prisons were shocked by the stories from California prisons like the Corcoran scandal, where guards routinely stage cock fights between prisoners for their own amusement, frequently shooting the prisoners once they are bored with the fight; or stories from the federal prison in Dublin, where guards take money from male prisoners for the "privilege" to rape women prisoners.

There is a lot of frustration in working against the "justice" system. There are many hard people and it's a difficult political climate. Yet hammering away at the foundations of the criminal justice system is important.

—Dana Ryan

Meridel LeSueur, a lifetime of 'ripening'

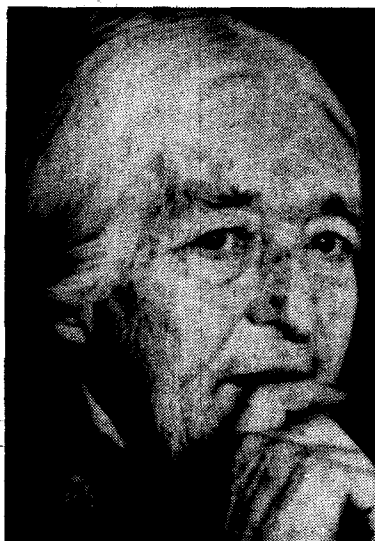
From its beginning right up to the last year of her life, which ended on Nov. 14 in Hudson, Wis., in her 96th year, Meridel Le Sueur looked steadily ahead to tomorrow. Never did she look at the past as "past," but always as it spoke to the future. "Ripening" was the title she gave to the collection of selections from her work that came out in a second edition in her 90th year, as the word that best expressed the continuous growth and unfolding she felt her writing represented. And she continued to write to the end.

HER ARDENTLY SOCIALIST mother and stepfather, and the struggles of the radical farmers and labor groups she grew up amidst in the Midwest—from the Populists and Farmers Alliance to the Wobblies of the IWW—helped to shape her thoughts. As a teenager she experienced the Palmer Raids and the persecution of pacifists and socialists after World War I. She was 27 when she was jailed for protesting the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti.

She once wrote to *News & Letters* that she had been "writing for radical papers since 1910!" The breadth and scope of her writing is legendary. She wrote in the 1920s and '30s for labor and left-wing journals like *The Worker* and *Masses*, and later for literary magazines, contributing everything from reports of strikes to book reviews and short stories. She wrote about the Depression and about the devastating effects of the drought on farmers. Most of all she wrote about the lives of women, in particular working-class women. Her work was praised by other writers, from Nelson Algren to Sinclair Lewis.

In 1945 her best known work, *North Star Country*, a poetic prose account of the settlement and growth of Minnesota, the Dakotas and Wisconsin, won special praise. But when McCarthyism descended on America, Meridel was blacklisted and very nearly dropped out of sight for 20 years until the 1960s and the emergence of a new Women's Liberation Movement "rediscovered" her. The revival was marked by the republication of *North Star Country* in 1984.

HER DIALOGUE WITH Raya Dunayevskaya began in 1986, when she discovered Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Lux-*



emburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution and wrote Raya a letter passionately describing how all the socialist women like her mother knew Rosa Luxemburg. Meridel poured out a story of the Midwest radicals' "belief in the permanent revolution and the rising from below."

"This history is not known even by the radicals," she wrote, "the history of Socialism in the Midwest. (It) is now rising out of the furrow, the sod, the organic memory. The Hormel strike and the farmers movement now is the reappearance of history buried, the perpetual consciousness of freedom...I wish my mother could read your wonderful book, which is an illumination...This memory comes up green like corn found in caves for a thousand years, moisture and heat and they make cob again. This concept of revolution springing green and perpetual from the proletariat is now becoming a reality. Deepest solidarity."

Raya wrote back: "Your letter was to me an exciting demonstration of how retrospective, when one is so rich in history as you are, can become perspective," and went on to discuss her concept of "dialectical history (which) no matter how many natural leaps it undergoes, must know the continuity of history to assure that any new revolution doesn't retrogress, and that 'revolution in permanence' means continuing revolution in self-development. Women's Liberationists especially must not just be the opposite of male, but must strive for totally new human relations. Which is why Marx from the beginning in 1844 called his philosophy a 'new humanism.' And that is what we are aiming for." With her letter Raya sent her just published *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future*.

THIS DIALOGUE WAS INTERRUPTED by Raya's death the next year, but was renewed nearly a decade later when we wrote to Meridel Le Sueur, who continued to read and comment enthusiastically on *N&L* through the years, to tell her that *Women's Liberation* and the *Dialectics of Revolution* would soon be published in a new edition and to ask for her comment. She wrote back: "I am what is called 'bed-ridden.' I was 94 this Spring, but flights of angels' visions accompany me. I published a book when I was 90 and now hope to make a collection of my work and write another poem. I have been reading Raya for many years, especially on the Woman Question and the theory of a perpetual revolution against the vanguard party...There is a wonderful spirit in this book, and it is badly needed in this time of questioning and new problems...We need the new moment, we need it badly."

It is that spirit of revolution and "reaching for the future" that characterized all of Meridel Le Sueur's life. We honor her memory and celebrate her life.

—Olga Domanski

Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Students at the State University of New York-Binghamton occupied the administration building for six days last month protesting the student government executive board's opposition to the school's affirmative action policy. The protesters demanded that the group's funds be frozen until the all-white male board is replaced.

Turkey's "Saturday Women" are being honored by the International League for Human Rights. The women have demonstrated weekly for over a year to call attention to close relatives who have "disappeared" in the government's repeated crackdowns on leftist and Kurdish activists. On Oct. 26, they were joined in an international day of action in Turkey by mothers of the disappeared from Bosnia, Lebanon, Argentina and Taiwan. Amnesty International reports 135 cases of "disappearances" in Turkey since 1991.

The parliament of the English Channel island of Guernsey has legalized abortion in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy (if two doctors approve), ending an 86-year-old law that made abortions punishable by life imprisonment! Irish women are still fighting for this right. The Irish Women's Abortion Support Group (IWASG) is organizing pro-choice activists in London to help Irish women travel to England for abortions. Formed in 1984, IWASG is a group of Irish women in London.

NEWS & LETTERS

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Raya Dunayevskaya

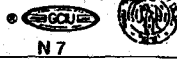
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Leaving Hood with fighting legacy

Jackson, Miss.—The employees at Hood Furniture stood for three years against Local 797, which was given to us by IUE International President William Bywater as a company local. This company went to Washington, taking three days to negotiate a contract for three years when they couldn't deal over the table in good faith with Local 282, Furniture Workers Division-IUE.

We had no part of the agreement. Ninety percent Black in the plant, and you are talking about white on white dealing with putting something on Black. And in these three years they added employees, the working facility grew, they bought new machines and everything.

When we had the chance to stand up and speak our opinion, we accepted Local 282. Then all of a sudden there's no overtime, business is so bad, there's a big lay-off and then a month later another big layoff. We reached agreement on a one-year contract on Sept. 20, and 17 days later we got the notice saying that the plant was going to close.

A PICTURE OF RACISM

Follow the history of that and you have to agree with me, that's racial. How in the world can you agree upon a contract with certain people for three years and everything goes fine, and then you agree upon one year with another color of skin and can't last 17 days? That is the picture.

They just don't want to deal with Black folk. They feel

UAW lets GM down size

Shreveport, La.—Retirement is what a lot of workers are talking about in the contract with General Motors the UAW signed in November. GM offered an extra \$6,000 and a \$10,000 voucher for a new car to workers who retired right away. Within a couple weeks 40,000 had signed up, and GM stopped the program.

Despite the talk, there was no guarantee of jobs in the new contract. The union sold out job security to get workers to retire. GM also removed the lid on how much retirees can make and still draw their full pension.

Because of widespread plant closings, GM has lots of workers scattered around the country but reluctant to move. So two years ago the GM unit that once helped supervisors move started paying workers to move to new plants.

At Shreveport, outside of a few new temporary hires last year who have been made permanent, the last workers hired were back in 1986.

For workers not retiring, about the only benefit is moving up in seniority. Here, with many transfers into the plant, a combination of companywide and plant seniority rules. Oddly enough, workers with the most plant seniority are in the once dirtiest departments like paint. It is all robots there now. It is not as unpleasant to work there—except for 1,000 jobs lost. Machines are not good or bad, it depends on who controls them.

The other thing GM is doing immediately is selling off more plants. Already workers have been transferring in here from the Monroe headlight plant which has been sold. You wonder how many UAW jobs will remain at GM at the end of the contract.

—Longtime GM worker

Somerville Mills secrets

Memphis, Tenn.—We were at Somerville Mills on Halloween day because, after stopping the production and sending the Victoria's Secrets to Mexico to be made, they claimed that this plant was closed. Local 282 Furniture Workers Division-IUE members have been keeping an eye on the plant since January, and there's always somebody there.

Once I got enough charges down to the Labor Board, the company attorney said, "Well, we'll meet, because we have had a couple of people out there working. We've been using the building to house some leftover products. And if you don't believe me that there's just a little stuff up there, I'll take you up there, too."

We met in Somerville, and Somerville Mills is about three miles out of the town. He went on ahead of us. When we got out there, nobody was in the plant but him. Where are the people that you said worked here? "I don't know. When I came here, they were gone. Now come, look right over here." No, we want to go this way.

We went on around and came down through the warehouse. The warehouse was filled all the way to the back, packed full of rolls of material, all kinds. There were about 18 sewing machines, not a speck of dust on them. One of them was threaded up and turned on, ready to go. One had trimmings still down there on the pedal. They left so fast, they left their lunch and keys and all.

We went into the shipping area. The computer was plugged up, computer printout piled up there on the desk. So we started looking through the printout. The attorney came—"No, you all can't look through that"—and put it in his folder. So I got two pieces of paper out of the trash can and was looking at them. "You can't look at that; you can't see that." Yes I can, because this isn't anything but trash. I kept on looking.

So he came over there and he grabbed it. Broke my fingernail, longest fingernail I had. I started crying. And I told him, "And anyhow, I'm letting you know right now my back is hurting." You have to do what you have to do when you have to do it. I haven't been in a fight in years.

—Ida Leachman
Vice President, Local 282

like we should take what they give us and be satisfied. It doesn't work that way. I worked there four years and I was only making \$5.41 an hour. My kids are grown, but if they were at home and I was paying rent, trying to send these four kids to school, pay doctor bills, trying to pay for a car to get me back and forth to work, how far would that \$5.41 go?

A bedroom set that we made costs over \$4,000. It's just pitiful how expensive the product that we make for Hood is and how cheap our labor is. People with good skills, good intelligence who can make top quality get welfare pay. Here you're making a person filthy rich, and this person is trying to make you just as miserable as he can make you.

UNIONIZE, DON'T MOURN

You have to fight for something in order to get something. How am I going to work day after day for that same \$5.41 and prices are going up on everything? I can't go to the negotiating table and ask this white man for a 15¢ raise for one year? Then after he gave it to me, he says, well, she thinks she got something, she got 15¢, I'm going to close the plant. But you have to start somewhere to make it better for the young ones.

Nobody is sad or unhappy about the plant's closing, but yet and still everybody is concerned about their living, where are they going tomorrow. One thing I have to admire about these people that work for Hood: They know what they want and they stand their ground. We have proved to Hood and the whole world that we have faith that we are people that you just can't throw anything on and we accept it.

I would say to any workers, if you're not unionized, get unionized and stick together, because the company is not going to represent you. If you're not in a union, you don't have a voice, an opinion, I don't care whose job you're on. Don't get discouraged by what happened to us. We still have our dignity.

—Hood Furniture workers

Mural honors immigrant Jewish labor tradition



Part of the mural "Fabric of Our Lives" honoring radical traditions of Jewish labor.

Chicago—A rededication, of the Jewish labor mural that adorns the outside wall at the Bernard Horwich Jewish Community Center, 3003 W. Touhy, became a

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

slight degree the vampire thirst for the living blood of labour. To appropriate labour during all the 24 hours of the day is, therefore, the inherent tendency of capitalist production...."

Marx then explains the "relay" system—what Staley calls rotation—of 12-hour shifts that rotate from day to night and which by the 1860s had already been abolished in England except in the "free," or unregulated industries! Marx continues:

"What is a working day? What is the length of time during which capital may consume the labour-power whose daily value it buys...?" To these questions capital replies: the working day contains the full 24 hours....Hence it is self-evident that the labourer is nothing else, his whole life through, than labour-power, that therefore all his disposable time is by nature and law labour-time....Time for education, for intellectual development, for the fulfilling of social functions and for social intercourse, for the free-play of his bodily and mental activity, even the rest time of Sunday—moonshine!

"Capital higgles over a meal-time, incorporating it where possible with the process of production itself, so that food is given to the labourer as to a mere means of production, as coal is supplied to the boiler, grease and oil to the machinery. It reduces the sound sleep needed for the restoration, reparation, refreshment of the bodily powers to just so many hours of torpor as the revival of an organism, absolutely exhausted, renders essential....Capital cares nothing for the length of life of labour-power. All that concerns it is simply and solely the maximum of labour-power, that can be rendered fluent in a working day. It attains this end by shortening the extent of the labourer's life...."

*Capital, Vol. I, Kerr edition, pp. 282-83; Vintage edition; pp. 375-76.

'How to win strikes in '90s'

Detroit—Nearly 200 Detroit newspaper strikers and supporters participated in a conference titled "How to Win Strikes in the 1990s" at Wayne State University Dec. 7. Both invited speakers and audience took up the global and historic significance of the Detroit newspaper strike as well as concrete strategies flowing from convictions that the rank and file must direct the strike.

Invited speaker James Gibbs, a third-generation Virginia coal miner, learned in the 1992 Pittston strike to "learn from different situations and put it all together." Both he and Juan Gonzales, who had weathered the New York Daily News strike, insisted that "no strike is small" because the entire labor movement can be engaged for support. Detroit steelworker Les Caulfield described Steelworkers helping Rubberworkers in the Bridgestone-Firestone 21-month strike: They sent 100 activists nationwide who reported back weekly via conference call. John Poquette of the Canadian Autoworkers Union said government cutbacks in Ontario "turned a coalition into a movement." He invited all to International Days of Protest in Windsor, Ont., June 12-13, 1997 to close the U.S.-Canada border.

The afternoon panel focused on Detroit and included U.S. Congressman and strike supporter John Conyers (the only politician invited). Striker Paul Kulka (Teamsters Local 372) declared, "We are fighting for the way we see this country...to change this country for the better." Kate DeSmet (Newspaper Guild Local 22) drew lessons from several ongoing struggles (including that of the Delta Pride catfish workers) to proclaim "every striker must be a leader."

Other speakers and participants from the floor offered ideas centering on mass direct action to disrupt production, or an expansion of the strikers' newspaper *The Detroit Sunday Journal*. An appeal to the AFL-CIO for a national labor in Detroit, signed by 840 newspaper strikers, has been faxed around the country. For a copy, fax (313) 963-6944 or call (810) 447-3716.

—Susan Van Gelder

celebration this fall of the often forgotten radical traditions and long labor history of the Jewish community, which the Jewish Labor Committee is trying to revive.

The beautiful tile mosaic entitled "Fabric of Our Lives" was created 16 years ago by school teachers Miriam Socoloff and Cynthia Weiss, and was assembled by over 100 community volunteers in a process that was described as "something like a quilting bee."

The mural's symbolism tells the story of the ghettos, pogroms and poverty the Jewish immigrants were trying to leave behind when they fled Europe at the beginning of the century. Instead of finding liberation, they wound up in sweatshops, working under brutal conditions. In the mural, the fabric the women are working on at their sewing machines becomes the familiar Chicago streets the immigrants lived on. Color posters are available from the Jewish Labor Committee, 847-381-1713.

The audience of perhaps 150 was asked how many came from families in which someone had been involved in the struggles of the "needle trades." It seemed as if every hand went up. It made more significant the appeal from a young woman AFSCME organizer that it wasn't enough to sit there and "celebrate" history; we need to begin to make it again. A number at the meeting recognized that involves making links to the new immigrants, from very different lands, who are still struggling against discrimination and brutal working conditions today.

—Celebrant

European marches for jobs

Prague—"There are 20 million unemployed in the European Union where a further 50 million people live under the official poverty line," begins the Florence Appeal of various European labor organizations whose representatives gathered in Florence (Italy) last June.

The Florence Appeal points out: "The collapse of social security systems, unemployment and poverty attack human dignity. This can be seen in the decline of working conditions for labor, declining real incomes and pensions, and sinking social rights of the vast majority of the population as well as the emergence of racism. We see at the same time a concentration of capital, means of production and of land in a small number of persons. This situation must not be accepted."

The Appeal then goes on: "A massive reduction of the number of unemployed—above all in times of high productivity—can only be materialized by a radical shortening of working time with full wage and by making creation of new jobs a duty."

To achieve these goals the Appeal calls for a mobilization of all those who are concerned or endangered by unemployment and poverty: wage workers, unemployed, receivers of social assistance, pensioners and youth, and for their common organization. "It is for this reason we call for European marches against unemployment, job insecurity and social exclusion."

The participants at a follow-up conference in Paris in September agreed, too, that marches should not be limited to Western Europe but should be extended to Eastern Europe and some North African countries. While the original aim of a big all-European march/demonstration in Amsterdam (probably in May/June 1997) was not abandoned, the stress is now being laid on decentralized national marches and activities. Nevertheless, just because of the great number of countries participating we may be witness to the birth of a mass movement of European dimensions.

—Stephen Steiger

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

Editor's Note

To celebrate the publication of the new edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*, we publish here two writings which situate this work in the context of Dunayevskaya's overall approach to dialectical philosophy on the eve of the first edition of the book. The first selection is from a presentation given to the Resident Editorial Board of News and Letters Committees on Feb. 17, 1985 as she was preparing for her March 21, 1985 lecture on "Dialectics of Revolution: American Roots and Marx's World Humanist Concepts" sponsored by Wayne State University Archives of Urban and Labor Affairs. The second selection is an excerpt from that lecture, now published as an introduction to the 1988 Columbia edition of *Marxism and Freedom*, in which Dunayevskaya engages in what she calls a "retrospective/perspective" of the development of Marxist-Humanism.

MARX, BY UNCHAINING THE dialectic first, discovered a whole new continent of thought and of revolution. Read again those words of thought and of revolution. That is what concreteness means in a dialectical sense. This openness and totally new direction found constant proof of itself and its own correctness because Marx's critique of the Hegelian dialectic meant not merely a substitution of materialism for idealism, but an extension of the dialectic from its seeming burial in thought alone by the presence of the dialectic in the development of reality.

Not only that. Marx thereby revealed the historic barrier which none could cross over, not even a Hegel. It is this which exposed the need for Hegel to have that mystical covering spread over his revolutionary dialectic—the power of negativity. The greatness of the French Revolution was the dialectics in action of the *sans culottes*, who were the true discoverers and practitioners of democracy. They were artisans and not yet subjects that would successfully, totally transform the old society.

Marx, on the other hand, did see a revolutionary subject—the Proletariat—who could, and he said would, achieve the revolutionary transformation. Moreover, Marx made it clear that just as he was not separating thought from reality or the fundamental Man/Woman relationship, so he was uniting materialism with idealism, calling it a "new Humanism." With it, he separated himself from Feuerbach's mechanical materialism and what he called "vulgar communism."

Indeed, he praised Hegel for that most creative category "negation of negation" which Feuerbach had rejected as "mystical." Marx worked for a truly new world which we would call classless, non-sexist, non-racist, truly human relations.

Let me sum it up by repeating briefly the two true historic unchainings of the dialectic: (1) No separation between thought and reality—dialectics characterized both the subjective and objective development. (2) He was not keeping in totally separate departments materialism and idealism. He was uniting them to create a totally new category—a "new Humanism."

Each age has the laborious and unpostponable task of working out for its own era what, precisely, of the dialectic would achieve freedom. Lenin singled out "transformation into opposite" when he was confronted by the betrayal of the Second International. [The] most crucial aspect, and totally new, was that he didn't stop with betrayal, and he didn't leave the totally new aspect ["transformation into opposite"] at the economic stage when capitalism reached imperialism. Lenin showed that since every unit has its opposite within itself, it is also true of a section of labor itself which had become "the aristocracy of labor."

All this was done in his return to the encounter with the Hegelian dialectic "in and for itself" by having a totally new "additional" subject that was not just a helpmate. Rather it was the actual bacillus of the revolution—the national revolution, in his case the 1916 Irish Easter Uprising. Lenin, however, did not know the Humanist Essays of Marx, much less where Marx left off in his "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," promising to return.¹

WHAT WE HAD TO DO for the mid-20th century when we were confronted with the shocking fact of counter-revolution arising from within the revolution itself, the transformation into opposite of the first workers' state into a state-capitalist society, was to catch the link of continuity with Marx when he unchained the Hegelian dialectic, transforming and extending it to the Marxian. The climax of what was churning in me in the immediate post-World War II period and came alive first in the simultaneity of my exchange of letters with [C.L.R.] James and [Grace] Lee [Boggs] on Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* and my activity in the 1949-50 miners' general strike, were [my] letters of May 12 and May 20, 1953.²

The first unchaining of the dialectic for our age came with my [1953] breakthrough on the Absolute Idea: I held that there was a movement from Practice as well as from Theory. In a word, the consciousness in making a category of the movement from Practice was to expand with the added phrase: "which is itself a form of Theory." And it is this movement from Practice that is itself a form of Theory that created the challenge for the theo-

reticians to work out the new stage of cognition where philosophy would be rooted in this movement from Practice.

A second unchaining which revealed the specificity, originality and uniqueness of the whole body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism came to first bloom in 1973 when the return to Hegel meant both the grappling with all of Hegel's major philosophic works and the realization that I happened to have started the confrontation in Hegel's *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* at the very paragraph following where Marx left off in Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*.

In our case this resulted in the fact that not even Absolute as combining theory and practice, i.e., as totality really answered the task. The task first begins [there], or, to put it the way we expressed it in Chapter 1 of *Philosophy and Revolution*: It is Absolute Idea as new Beginning. By then plunging into the three final syllogisms of the *Philosophy of Mind* we discovered also a new Hegel. Thus Hegel in the last year of his life, in the final paragraph of the *Encyclopedia replaced Logic*, left it totally open for future generations.³

IN SO FAR AS MARX WAS CONCERNED, though he didn't comment on those specific syllogisms, he had so unified philosophy and revolution that, though his *Critique of the Gotha Program* did not contain the expression "revolution in permanence," it could nonetheless become ground for organization.

Indeed, our serious analysis of that work showed that no post-Marx Marxist unchained the dialectic, not even Lenin, who did penetrate the dialectic on revolution, but did not when it came to the Party. This led us to the creation of a category of post-Marx Marxism as [specifying those who do] not fully reconnect with Marx's Marxism.

In a word, even the Great Divide in Marxism which Lenin did create and which was concretized in his magnificent *State and Revolution* had, however, kept the Party as his own "private enclave" called the vanguard party. The two fields in which I did not follow Lenin were the vanguard party and his confined conception of women's liberation.

Two points are involved in [the] remembrance of things past: One is that embedded in the embryo of the past is the presence of the next step, whether or not one is fully conscious of it. Two is that presence of the future inherent in the "here and now" characterizes also the first instinctual reaction which is philosophically called "first negation." What makes you move to the second negation creates a new humus for future development.

Marx's magnificent, original, historic unchaining of the dialectic was the creation of such a new humus. This unchaining began, of course, with his refusal to consider

(Continued on page 5)

That *WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND THE DIALECTICS OF REVOLUTION* is even more important to a new generation of feminists in the 1990s than when this book first appeared a decade ago is due to the deepening of the retrogression the Women's Liberation Movement has suffered over this decade — not only from the forces of reaction without, but from the contradictions within the movement. What had first drawn Adrienne Rich to Dunayevskaya's work and a rethinking of the relationship of Women's Liberation to Marxism was the need to confront those contradictions, in particular the tendencies toward an "inner emigration." ("I'm talking not just about lesbian separatism but about versions of female oppression which neglect both female agency and female diversity," Rich wrote.) Her questioning resonated with the profound philosophic discussion Dunayevskaya initiated, in her Introduction and Overview to this book, of the "private enclaves" that had to be overcome for the Women's Liberation Movement to continue working out the dialectic to full freedom and a world of totally new human relations.

The Black feminist writer and theorist Gloria Joseph has likewise welcomed Dunayevskaya's discussion of the contradictions confronting feminists today. In a sharp critique of all those "leading feminist scholars" who "have excluded working-class women and Black women from their elite 'private enclave,'" what Joseph singled out was Dunayevskaya's powerful discussion of Sojourner Truth's phrase "shortminded," which she invented to criticize the great Black Abolitionist leader, Frederick Douglass, for not including women in the struggle for enfranchisement after the Civil War. What Dunayevskaya saw in

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Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution

Reaching for the Future

RAYA
DUNAYEVSKAYA

Introduction and Overview

Part I. Women, Labor and the Black Dimension

Part II. Revolutionaries All

Part III. Sexism, Politics and Revolution — Japan, Portugal, Poland, China, Latin America, the U.S. — Is There an Organizational Answer?

Part IV. The Trail to the 1980s: The Missing Link — Philosophy — in the Relationship of Revolution to Organization

Sojourner Truth's phrase, Joseph stressed, was "a concept, one that had become a new language of thought against any who would impose a limitation to freedom." Any who today, she concluded, "put limitations on who the movement is for and (ignore) who remains exploited in the process of others being liberated," is similarly "shortminded."

Dunayevskaya wrote her Introduction and Overview to *WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND THE DIALECTICS OF REVOLUTION* after she had organized these 32 pieces written over 35 years into four parts, not chronologically but as what could show the various stages of the dialectics of revolution. In the 1980s, in the face of the profound worldwide retrogression which Dunayevskaya called a "Changed World," just as this book was coming off the press, she embarked on yet a new study of the relation of dialectics to organization, which she had tentatively titled "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: the 'party' and forms of organization born out of spontaneity."

Dunayevskaya did not live to see the collapse in 1989-91 of the state-capitalism that had called itself Communism in Russia and East Europe, nor the nearly complete collapse of the Left, including the anti-Stalinist Left, that followed those events. Yet her entire body of work speaks profoundly to these events because from the very beginning of her development of Marxist-Humanism Dunayevskaya's life had been devoted to liberating Marx's Marxism from the theoretical and organizational systems attributed to him. Margaret Randall, who has written widely on Cuba and Nicaragua, is among those who were brought to seriously "rethink Marxism" after these events. Her 1992 book, *GATHERING RAGE: THE*

FAILURE OF 20TH CENTURY REVOLUTIONS TO DEVELOP A FEMINIST AGENDA, is especially illuminating in finding in Dunayevskaya's work the "point of departure for those of us who seek answers in the multiple intersections of class, race, gender, and sexual orientation." Throughout Dunayevskaya's life and work, Randall stresses, "women's liberation was an unnegotiable concern."

It was Raya Dunayevskaya's unique re-creation of the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic "as new beginning" that allowed her to anticipate, as well, many of the current debates over particularity, difference and multiculturalism long before postmodern theories came to the fore in the late 1980s. By incorporating these issues within a unique dialectical perspective, she not only avoided the relativizing, demobilizing tendencies of postmodernism but was enabled to reach far beyond earlier versions of the dialectic.

The second part of the title of this collection, *REACHING FOR THE FUTURE*, is what speaks the most directly to today's new generation of "women's liberationists," whose task it becomes to continue working out the dialectic to full freedom. No one has said it better than Meridel LeSueur, the powerful woman writer from the Midwest, best known for her proletarian writings of the 1930s and her classic history of NORTH STAR COUNTRY, whose work for women's liberation has continued well into her 90s. When she heard of the plans for a new edition of *WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND THE DIALECTICS OF REVOLUTION* she wrote: "There is a wonderful spirit in this book, and it is badly needed in this time of questioning and new problems." She later framed this thought in one insistent sentence: "We need the new moment, we need it badly."

Olga Domanski, December 1995
From the Preface

\$15.95 . . . To order *WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND THE DIALECTICS OF REVOLUTION*, see *NEWS & LETTERS literature ad on page 7*.

PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE

Dialectics of revolution and women's liberation

Black women reach for freedom

After reading Raya Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*, I thought about how we are living under the whip of counter-revolution. To understand that, by being a dialectician, you always have to see the opposites as struggle. In each of our lives there has been a time when we thought the struggle was won, only to find it just begun.

Looking back over the Civil Rights Movement strikes, the slave mentality that we face each day as workers, proves that the struggle is always at hand. Looking back at 150 years of history in *WLDR* shows an adventurous journey of confrontations, forward moves, and yes, unfortunately, backward moves.

The year 1831 brings to mind one of the greatest slave revolts. Yes, we all know of Nat Turner, but who knows that in the same period Maria Stewart, one of the many great Black women in our history, was saying this to us:

"O, ye daughters of Africa, awake! awake! arise! No longer sleep nor slumber but distinguish yourselves. Show forth to the world that we are endowed with noble and exalted faculties...How long shall the fair daughters of Africa be compelled to bury their minds and talents beneath a load of iron pots and kettles?...How long shall a mean set of men flatter us with their smiles, and enrich themselves with our hard earnings: their wives' fingers sparkling with rings and they themselves laughing at our folly?" (*WLDR*, p. 203).

This takes us to the Black dimension which Dunayevskaya says was always the vanguard in American history. But even as Black, it was the Black man who was recognized. It was Turner, not Stewart. This tells me that even though Blacks have always been willing to speak out and fight for freedom, we as women have not been given the credit for standing on the front line, willing to take a bullet, maybe even before the man—not behind him, but mostly in front of him.

The year 1841 finds the great philosopher, Marx, abruptly intermingling with his master, Hegel, when he posed to himself the question, is it possible to continue something as great as Hegel's dialectical philosophy after he is gone. How do we begin anew?

This brings to mind the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., the dreamer. But it's people like you and me who have struggled to make the dream a reality. Marx was accepting that self-development, self-transcendence, self-determination all comes from inside. It is the revolutionary nature—whether it's in you as an individual, or whether it's in the nations—that will fight for freedom.

This is where philosophy comes in as an everyday part of our being. Not as just another word that we as a people or a nation seem to cringe away from; but as a welcome reprieve that each in his or her own way becomes a philosopher for freedom, willing to challenge the masters of the world and to say, "No more. We have only just begun to make the dream a reality."

—Anita Johnson

Revolution-in-permanence

Sharpley-Whiting's article on the new edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* raised questions in my mind that more distinctly brought out the meaning and significance of the book for today (See October N&L).

To me, *WLDR* challenges us to delve more seriously into dialectics as a revolutionary methodology indispensable for women's liberation. The Women's Liberation Movement of the late 1960s was such a profound movement, Dunayevskaya argues, because it raised the question of "what happens after the revolution" before the revolution. Women refused to wait, refused to accept secondary status to vague notions of the class struggle, anti-imperialism, the Black revolution.

This is what Dunayevskaya meant when she said that in the late 1960s, women's liberation changed from "an Idea whose time has come" into a full-fledged, independent movement, declaring its centrality to all future revolutionary thought and action. By declaring that revolution has to be total from the start, women's liberation demanded that a deeper concept of liberation become the ground for revolutionary praxis.

Thus, to me it's not that *WLDR* critiques feminism for theorizing "as a form of practice," or for not doing both, as Sharpley-Whiting argues. Rather, it challenges feminism to develop theory into the totality of philosophy.

That's why Part IV of the book is so crucially important to grasping its meaning and significance. The essays in this part excavate the continuity between the young, idealist Marx of 1844 who declared his philosophy a "new Humanism" through the mature Marx of the last decade. Marx's last writings on women and the Third World show the great divide between the unilinear economism of post-Marx Marxism beginning with Engels and the multilinear dialectics of human history that Marx developed. Dunayevskaya soundly critiques feminists for accepting Engels' view as Marx's own.

Where Engels saw the advent of private property as signalling "the world historic defeat of the female sex," Marx held close to the self-development of humanity from primitive communism through his own period.

So much of the beauty of *WLDR* lies in its illumination of women as Reason and revolutionary force throughout history, showing the lie to Engels' notion of "the world historic defeat of the female sex." This is crucially important for today's battles within feminism. How much

poststructuralist feminism, after all, relies on Engelsian anthropology descended through Levi-Strauss?

In delving into Marx's last writings, Dunayevskaya shows how Marx's original appropriation and transformation of the Hegelian dialectic of negativity determined his study of gender and the Third World at the end of his life, thus pointing out "the trail" for feminists and revolutionaries to re-create a "total, global and permanent" vision of human emancipation for today.

WLDR's challenge is not for feminists to grapple with male "theorists of oppression and revolution," in general, as important as that may be. I'm not, in any case, as sure as Sharpley-Whiting that the "excision and exorcism" of male theorists is a major tendency today, with the influence of theorists like Foucault, Derrida, Freud and Lacan on feminist theory. *WLDR*'s challenge is for feminists to work out and develop the total vision of freedom implicit in women's liberation into an explicit philosophy of revolution-in-permanence.

—Maya Jhansi

Organization and philosophy

The first crucial component to strike me in *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* was the emphasis on organization. When I saw that reality and organization are both in need of a relation to philosophy, it struck me that organization was more than objectivity in some concrete sense.

Raya put it in the form of a question: "It became clear to me that the question 'Can there be an organizational answer?' could not be answered without dealing with the whole question of philosophy, the missing link not only for the pragmatists but for all post-Marx Marxists" (p.9).

One aspect Raya gets at here is the thorough way in which the Women's Liberation Movement questioned shibboleths of Left organizing and the ongoing concern for organizational process. But more crucial, as we look at the century of revolution-turned-into-opposite, is that all that concern for organization remained on a practical level only. How can we take responsibility for changing that? How is *WLDR* part of that process?

This brings me to one of the saddest articles ever to disgrace the pages of *News & Letters* in my reading—although it speaks volumes to the depths of N&L's commitment to philosophic dialogue. I refer to Teresa Ebert's response to Laurie Cashdan's review of her book, *Ludic Feminism and After* (See recent issues of N&L for Cashdan-Ebert debate).

Having accused Laurie of inventing multiple Marxes, Ebert creates a straw man, a false front for determinism, and names this bogey "Marx." Overlooking the fact that Marx's passion and thought is moved by masses in motion, from Abolitionism to 1848 to the Civil War to the Paris Commune, she goes the easy route of economic

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

(Continued from page 4)

that Hegel's Notion was related only to thought.

Once Marx discovered a new continent of thought and of revolution, the task he assigned to himself was that of uniting philosophy and reality. The proof of that unity came from uncovering the hidden Subject—the driving forces of the revolutions-to-be—the Proletariat—and at the same time focusing on Man/Woman, as alienated and alienating, which must be totally uprooted as the way to fully human relationships...

Between Marx and our age only Lenin seriously returned to Marx's roots in Hegel. But while Lenin commented profoundly and brilliantly on the whole of *Science of Logic*—including the Doctrine of the Notion, where he embraced and concretized Hegel's principle that, "Cognition not only reflects the world, but creates it"—he nevertheless concretized only the single dialectical principle of transformation into opposite; of every unit containing its opposite within itself.

Unfortunately, other questions, especially the one on organization, Lenin left untouched within the vanguardist confines of his 1902-03 *What is to be Done?*

OUR AGE HAS FOCUSED on the dialectics of revolution as the determinant. Nothing, including organization, the party, can find any escape route from that determinant. Even the Absolute Method itself is but the road to the Absolute Idea, Absolute Mind. When the Self-Thinking Idea comes with the Self-Bringing Forth of Freedom, we will have actual total freedom...

I wish to give you at least a brief view of my new book, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future*. The first thing I noticed in rereading that thirty-five-year compilation of arti-

reductionism.

That such a vulgar Marxism could be alive in the face of the evidence of history is sad. But the real tragedy is

that Ebert has no Reason—no reason for what she says, how she says it, or why she says it. Reason, to her, is more bourgeois creativity for the pampereed creature.

I raised her determinism here to contrast it with one of Raya's most central insights—that the creativity of masses in motion creates new consciousness. As Raya says in the Introduction/Overview to *WLDR*: "[E]very one of the historic periods recorded here discloses the existence of both a new revolutionary force and a new consciousness—Reason itself—no matter how different the situation or the country in which the events unravel, and no matter how hidden from history, past or in-the-making, it has remained" (3).

There is an interesting gloss on this passage later: "To see only that women have been 'Hidden from History' and not that they have been hidden from philosophy means that you have not grasped what it means that throughout history women have been not only force but Reason, revolutionaries in action and in thought" (108). Here Raya is maintaining that women have always been Reason, but that the male philosophers—who said women lacked philosophical ability and that they should keep silent—missed this dimension. She returns to this error in our own age:

"New forces of revolution were challenging the theoreticians to come up with nothing short of a new form of cognition, a new way of life. Instead, they were being saddled with new political tyrannies, new forms of mass destruction, a new stage of production, and a total way of nuclear terror and death" (11).

So if new forces of revolution and new consciousness are met by ideas that limit them, by oppressions that bind them, there is no unity of thought and activity as totality, but only scattered energies. This fragmentation has led to an apparent inability to bring about the kind of revolution the Women's Liberation Movement has aspired to. We must ask what went wrong.

We start from Raya's critique of delaying philosophy, picking it up en route, or scorning it altogether. The dialectics of philosophy and organization has to be explicit. Philosophy as academic abstraction is not what we want.

Throughout *WLDR*, Raya is recording, reflecting, and participating in a multidimensional feminism without subsuming women's liberation into reformism or essentialism. These issues—of diversity, multiple identities, origins, allegiances, and so on—are crucial to all dimensions of freedom struggles.

WLDR addresses what happened in the past, with the immediacy of eye-witness participation, and yet poses the numerous contradictions which the movements still face today, more urgently and concretely. *WLDR* maintains the centrality of women to revolution and of organization as a question, not a predetermined cage.

—Jennifer Pen

Power of negativity

cles—with a focus on a single revolutionary force as Reason, women's liberation—is that the Dialectics of Revolution is characteristic of all the four forces we singled out in the United States—labor, Blacks, youth, as well as women. All are moments of revolution, and nobody can know before the event itself who will be the one in the concrete, particular revolution.

This determined my 1985 Introduction and Overview to this book, which culminated in what we call the "Trail to the 1980s." In a word, no matter who the specific revolutionary force turns out to be—labor, Blacks, youth, women—the whole truth is in the dual rhythm of any revolution: the overthrow of the old society and the creation of new human relations. It requires the spelling out of that dialectic in its totality with every individual subject.

This is true not just as a summation, but rather as a new beginning. Just as Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence" made it clear that the revolution does not end with the overthrow of the old but must continue to the new, so you begin to feel this presence of the future in the present. This is the time when every man, woman and child feels this newness precisely because it is now rooted in such new beginning.

1. Marx broke off his 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" in commenting on para. 384 of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*. In her 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes," Dunayevskaya began her commentary with para. 385.

2. See *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1989).

3. In the final paragraph of the 1831 edition of the *Philosophy of Mind*, Hegel passes beyond Logic as mediation in presenting "Self-Knowing Reason" as the unity-in-difference of Nature and Mind.



STATE OF THE NATION—AFTER THE ELECTIONS

The problem with Affirmative Action, the law passed in the 1970s, was that, like so many Civil Rights issues, it became stagnant after the legislation was passed and the movement went into the State. When the human spirit gets separated from bourgeois law, the ground gets shifted tremendously.

It wasn't the law that destroyed segregation in the South, but the actual new human relations created between Black and white youth. The humanism was slashed once the movement stopped and bourgeois law became the pacifier. It became easy for the Right to degrade Affirmative Action to a narrow concept, like "quotas." Only a social movement can determine freedom.

Freedom fighter
Los Angeles

* * *

I was assigned by workfare as a housekeeper in a hospital. They liked my work and gave me good recommendations, but workfare does not permit you to move into a permanent job at the same place. So I was forced to leave and to go into "job training," even though I already had skills. Now I am supposed to get a regular job and get off welfare. They are supposed to give me leads so I can find a job, but they don't give me any leads. So now I'm doing nothing.

Former WEP worker
New York City

* * *

The attack on welfare women has achieved the demonization of a segment of the population to be this system's "scapegoats." It puts the battle in the context of the degenerating world situation. That kind of demonization worked for the rulers in Bosnia. Are we going to allow it to happen here?

Women's liberationist
Memphis

* * *

Looking at the detailed voters polls published in the New York Times, I noticed the expected gender and racial gaps, with women and minorities voting heavily against Dole, but men and white people each giving a slight edge to Dole and the Republicans. Since I always look for signs of solidarity across race and gender lines, I also noticed a different pattern among whites aged 18 to 29, who were the only age group of whites to vote against Dole. The same pattern was found among all races aged 18 to 29, versus males 30 and older. While not too much should be made of an election in which Clinton hardly represented a clear alternative to Dole, still, it made me wonder about the possibility of youth movements in the coming period.

Sociologist
Indiana

* * *

We can see in the sweatshops today what automation has brought to the working class of this country—either being worked to death, slaving at jobs with low pay and no benefits, or being unemployed. All I can see left for the working class to do is make a revolution, where all people are the working class and have charge of the means of production.

Ready
California

* * *

The president of the Oklahoma City charity, "Feed the Children," has criticized welfare reform as having a harmful effect on children who are malnourished due to poverty. It is closely related to the sad state of health care in general. More than one in five Oklahoman children have no health insurance and people without coverage tend to postpone medical attention until it is absolutely necessary and the problem is so severe they have to go to the emergency room. In many cases these uninsured are the working poor, whose employers don't provide the insurance, and who earn "too much" to qualify for public assistance, but not enough to buy insurance or pay for a doctor.

In the face of this, the newly-elected state legislature has nonetheless promised to make Corrections, not health care, its priority during the current session, which just started.

Correspondent
Oklahoma

* * *

The Christian fundamentalist movement sees women as less than human, reduced to a function and role. They even call the pregnant woman "mother" when she has no children! Abortion is about the woman's life—her life—woman as human. We need to rethink the naming of our movement as "pro-choice" because "choice" leaves the door open for accusations of choosing to destroy "life" instead of recognizing what life really is, what being human really is.

Sonia Bergonzi
Chicago

* * *

It seems pretty clear to me that the stories are true about the CIA funding their predatory operations with drug money secured from what they brought into and sold in the States. I think the war on drugs is just a big pretense to put more military control in South and Central America. Manifest Destiny continues.

Prisoner
Texas

* * *

A study by the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice says the state of California has increased spending on prisons at the expense of African-American students. The study says that from 1980-81, 9.2% of the state's general fund went to higher education and 2.3% went to prisons. But in 1996-97, 9.4% went to prisons, with only 8.7% to education. The study sees a connection between those numbers and the increase of Blacks incarcerated in California.

Observer
Oakland, Cal.

* * *

In these days of retrogression and ideological pollution, it's not enough to merely invoke the word "revolution"—you must link your concept of revolution to a total uprooting, which means voicing the name of Karl Marx. Thus I was delighted when, in a recent poetry reading at San Jose State University, feminist lesbian poet Adrienne Rich said that she found herself often returning to Marx's observation that when the conditions of production normalize the exploitation of human beings, the fullness of what it means to be human is besieged. In a society which, as Rich said, seems "determined to deny art any control" she called for political engagement, commemoration of the lives of revolutionaries, and a creativity and poetry where we "must recall all we are in danger of letting go."

Feminist professor
California



**MARX VS
POST-MARX
MARXISM**

Laurie Cashdan's response—to my theoretical critique of her attempt to prove the correctness of Dunayevskaya's bourgeois reading of Marx as a humanist—does not develop an argument but keeps repeating the same point. Over and over, she claims I reduce Marxism to an economic determinism... Revolutionary feminism is not voluntaristic humanism but CLASS STRUGGLE to end the exploitation of people's labor and to transform the condition of oppression across differences.

Teresa Ebert
Guilford, N.Y.

* * *

Ebert makes an abstraction out of class struggle, as if it doesn't involve individual workers as subjects. To find the subjectivity that can transform reality one would have to turn to an outside force. That force is what neither Cashdan nor Ebert mentioned—the vanguard party to lead. That is the logic of Ebert's arguments.

Women's Liberationist
Illinois

* * *

It is a sign of the theoretical innocence of the cult of Dunayevskaya that the slightest contact with "theory" confuses them. Jim Guthrie (Readers Views, November issue) posits a "break" in Ebert's career: a postmodern period and

Readers' Views

a post-postmodern phase. Is he familiar with Ebert's groundbreaking texts in which she theorized "resistance postmodernism"? There are 'no 'breaks' in her writings but a historical development. It is not Ebert's (or any theorist's) responsibility to avoid rigorous thinking in order to protect the innocent members of the cult from confusion.

Mas'ud Zavarzadeh
Syracuse, N.Y.

* * *

Although the 1844 Manuscripts are great to show Marx's humanist beginnings, it's in Capital where Marx really shows how economic relations are human relations. Ebert claims sole rights over Capital as well as revolutionary praxis, neither of which she understands. Lenin was right when he wrote: "It is impossible completely to understand Marx's Capital, and especially its first chapter, without having thoroughly studied and understood the whole of Hegel's Logic. Consequently, half a century later none of the Marxists understood Marx!"

Julia
Berkeley, Cal.

* * *

Dunayevskaya's critique of Post-Marx Marxists was that they did not grasp the necessity of developing the dialectic, which was Marx's central preoccupation through four decades in the 19th century. Yet Dunayevskaya poses philosophy, in philosophic terms, as the divide. Many post-Marx Marxists will answer that Marx himself turned away from direct discussion of philosophy in his four-decade development, and ask how she could claim "continuity" with an obvious divergence from that pattern. The point is that at different historic periods "concrete" assumes various forms. Perhaps our greatest challenge is to fully understand what Dunayevskaya developed on the need to grasp the concreteness of philosophy of our age.

Victor Hart
New York

* * *

There are people dying, starving out there while Teresa Ebert is waging a battle to purge Marx of his humanist dimensions. What a deplorable battle.

T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting
Indiana

●

WEST PAPUA

The West Papuans are made up of many tribes, speaking many languages. Their struggle is against Suharto and Indonesia's U.S.-backed military apparatus, which is supported by a host of multinational corporations like Chevron, Shell and Arco, and numerous logging, paper and mining companies. Many of the Indonesians consider these indigenous people as primitive savages and detach themselves from their struggle, while the very existence of the West Papuans is threatened by Indonesians moving in mass numbers to West Papua and destroying an environment that supports their lifestyle.

As I see it, when a society sees trees as logs or paper, diverse people as savages, and both as commodities to be exploited by brute force, if necessary—that society can only be described as exploitative, racist and inhuman.

Student activist
Los Angeles

●

POLAND AND KRISTALLNACHT

For the first time in recent Polish history the demonstrations commemorating Kristallnacht were attended not "just" by youth, but joined by members of the Polish parliament, among them Jacek Kuron and Cezary Mizejewski. The day before the anniversary they presented in the Parliament a report documenting Polish fascists' attacks which resulted in 15 deaths, most recently a 14-year-old homeless youth in Kielce.

On Nov. 8 over a thousand mostly young demonstrators in Warsaw called for an end to racism. They chanted "One race, the human race" and carried banners with names of the recent fascists' victims. A similar demonstration in Lublin attracted 300 people.

At a time when Polish nationalism increasingly appeals to anti-semitism and xenophobia, as, for example, during the Nov. 11 Polish Independence Day rallies, such signs of opposition to racism are very much needed.

Urszula Wislanka
California

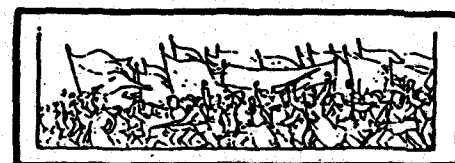
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BRITISH ILLUSIONS

Dave Black, in the October N&L, lists anarcho-syndicalists among those with illusions that Scargill's Socialist Labor Party might turn into something valid. That is a misconception of what I said and as I am the only Syndicalist who argued this in print I assume he was referring to me.

I said that for many younger socialists, the Miners' Strike of the '80s, rightly or wrongly, made Scargill a mythical figure. That meant that there would be a number of potential revolutionaries who now have illusions about Scargill and that it is essential we reach these. In a variety of organizations, anarchists have found they needed to work among the rank and file of movements whose leaderships mix reformism with Stalinism... Clearly, once Labour is in power, a lot more careerists will be climbing on the SLP bandwagon and there will then, after a wave of disillusionment among present members, be no opportunities to make converts. But that is a few months off.

Laurens Otter
England



THREE REVOLUTIONS

I was incensed when I found buried on page 16 of the Vancouver Sun a tiny paragraph on the fact that, with the stroke of a pen from his hospital bed where he was recovering from heart surgery, Boris Yeltsin has "abolished" the Anniversary of the Great October Revolution and renamed the day the "Day of Accord and Reconciliation"! Perhaps the anniversary of the French Revolution should be changed to "A Friendly Visit to the Bastille"?

Trying to bury, along with the corpse of the defunct Stalinist states, even the idea of the attempt to reach a more humane future cannot change the historic fact of one of the most important milestones in humanity's search for that goal.

Witness to Hungary 1956
British Columbia

* * *

The articles on the Hungarian Revolution brought to mind the fact that in 1956, the large Western Communist Parties in France and Italy supported the Russian invasion, while Mao said Khrushchev had not acted quickly enough. It took all the way until 1989 for the Italian CP to publicly recognize Hungary 1956 as a democratic, anti-totalitarian revolution. To this day, the French CP has refused any fundamental self-critique of its earlier stance.

Kevin A. Barry
Illinois

* * *

What Raya Dunayevskaya took up in her November N&L column on the Hungarian Revolution reverberated in the rest of the paper. I am thinking of the battle of ideas it wages against those—like Teresa Ebert—who would reduce Marxism and see workers as backward. Maya Jhansi's article about Althusser's vulgar materialism also answers Ebert, without mentioning her, when she writes; "Thought (to Althusser) is still determined by the economic base, that is, capitalist production relations," and contrasts that to seeing the worker as a creative molder of history. In the same issue you can see that is what was played out in life in the Hungarian Revolution.

Terry Moon
Memphis

ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS

I saw on CNN the scenes of the march of the Palestinian and Israeli women. Gila Svirskey wrote about in the November issue. It was every bit as inspiring as she described to see those women daring to stand up against the collective insanity of the settlers and their Likud supporters, whose myopic vision still sees the future through a re-establishment of the "Greater, Biblical Israel" irrespective of existing realities, to say nothing of human rights. It was the fear of the Arabs overwhelming Israel that kept the Israelis united all these years. Now the fear of an eventual peace keeps them increasingly divided.

Gyorgi Canada

I don't think Jewish opposition to Netanyahu is widely enough reported. It should be known that on Oct. 6, a declaration signed by 100 soldiers of the Israeli Defense Force reserves was published in *Haaretz*, saying that they could no longer bear the burden of shared responsibility for the retreat from the peace accords and continuing military control of the civilian population. They declared that they would take no part in the occupied territories or in guarding the settlements that serve the same purpose. At the same time, American Jews from the International Jewish Peace Union called for the U.S. government to press for withdrawal of the Israeli army from Hebron and a ban on settlement expansions in the West Bank.

Netanyahu opponent
San Francisco

I made my way to Jerusalem on the first anniversary of the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to join hands with thousands of sisters and brothers across the land. Our demonstration ran from the square in the center of where the sowers of hate amongst us gather together with their high

priests, who are running amuck today, with the reins of government in hand. The friendship and solidarity we receive from sisters and brothers like yourselves is a life-giving source from which we draw the energy and will to push ahead in the struggle. More power to you! More power to us all!

Arnon Dunetz
Tel Aviv

Gila Svirskey's moving article shows how women's liberation can be transcendent. *N&L* talks a lot about how much easier it is to agree on what you oppose than on what you are for. That's what the Israeli and Palestinian women struggled with in finding slogans for their march. Gila's article was a wonderful example of the category "woman as Reason as well as Force for revolution." These were women determined that their ideas will help to change the world.

Women's liberationist
Tennessee

I have been reading in *N&L* about the offensive of Sudan. We have been following the developments from that end for some time now. Sudan is very involved in many West African countries, including the Gambia, through humanitarian projects. I don't think Sudan will be on the agenda too long. She must change her tactics to win allies and that does not seem real. They will have to defeat the Pan-Africanist forces in Sudan before they can destabilize the region and beyond. I love the articles you have been printing on the Sudan because you rarely see anything about these things. We must also not forget about the Ogoni people. It is now one year since their leader was liquidated and many more are now on trial.

Ba Karang
Gambia

In the November 1996 "Black World" column Robert Reed writes that "the absence of ideology is not the problem in Sudan. There is an ideology, an all-pervading one. It is Islam." He then goes on

to equate Islam with the ultra-reactionary and fundamentalist National Islamic Front of Sudan and its leader, Hasan al-Turabi. As a secular Middle Eastern feminist, I am generally not in the business of defending religious precepts, but I was quite stunned by this condemnation of an entire people because they belong to the Muslim culture.

There never has been a unified Islamic ideology, just as there never has been a Christian, Jewish, Baha'i, Buddhist, etc. one. One manifestation of Christianity was the murderous Inquisition, and let's not forget that in 1492 Jews of Spain were saved by Muslim Ottomans who sent ships to rescue them. Another manifestation of Christianity is Liberation Theology which despite its many limitations has played an emancipatory role in Latin America for several decades. Likewise, progressive and conservative interpretations of Islam have always existed side by side.

Additionally, Sudan cannot simply be divided into a northern colonizer and southern colonized region. Many northern Sudanese, who consider themselves culturally Muslim, including Muslim feminists, are at the forefront of the opposition to Turabi and his retrogressive ideology and their voices must also be heard.

Neda Azad
Illinois

The similarities between events in Central Africa and Bosnia are striking and merit serious consideration in this context. I find it difficult to believe that these nationalities have always hated each other, that they have been at each other's throats for centuries and that any peaceful co-existence is hopelessly utopian. Both wars have one thing in common: reactionary politicians moving in to enrich themselves and consolidate their political power by using ethnicity as a basis to rebuild the collapse of the former Yugoslavia, Burundi, and Rwanda. It is a situation that seems to be a global problem.

Prisoner
Colorado

WHO READS N&L?



We are not only cut back on programs here but divided into cell houses and cut off from each other to the point of not really being able to see a friend in the same camp for months or maybe even a year. Even though the camp is as small as a can of sardines we do not even eat in the same dining room or go to the same yard. I really do look for them to come in here one of these days and have a mass execution of the prisoners, or for them to take us back to the old ball-and-chain days, with open and public beatings. I thank *N&L* for your time and concern with our problems, and for listening to our voices behind these walls.

Prisoner
Illinois

Because *N&L* takes theory so seriously, it makes the discussion of current events more meaningful. Through such serious discussions I am finding that what I thought I knew, I did not know at all.

Longtime radical
Oakland, Cal.

Enclosed is \$3 for 20 copies of the November issue. I'm writing on behalf of a socialist student group at my college. We are very impressed with your paper and want to distribute it on campus and in the community. We will also try to get the campus and community libraries to carry it. Best of luck in your endeavors!

New supporter
Wisconsin

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12/96

Black/Red View

by John Alan

An apparent political anomaly occurred in the November election when five Southern Black incumbent Democrats in North Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Texas were re-elected to Congress from newly created districts mandated by the Supreme Court with a white majority of voters. Their original districts were, in the words of the court, "racially gerrymandered" to assure Black representation in Congress. None of these incumbents got a majority of white votes in their new districts; their victories were based upon 90% of the Black vote and a narrow 30% of the white vote.

Conservatives are now hailing the re-election of these Black Democrats as a leap forward in American race relations. But there is a serious need to emphasize that the Supreme Court, largely appointed by Reagan and Bush, has in actuality given to white voters the power to determine and shape African-American political activity in a bizarre and contradictory kind of legal reasoning.

On the one hand the court has declared that the predominantly Black electoral districts are unconstitutional

Black politics whited out

because they violate the color-blind principles, in the words of Justice Sandra O'Connor, of a "system in which race no longer matters" and, on the other hand, the court sanctions the replacement of those Black districts with districts having a white majority as the constitutional habitat for Black politicians.

NON-RACIAL RACIAL REASONING

At stake here, in this kind of legal non-racial-but-racial reasoning, is not simply the career of this or that Black politician, but the continuity of the issue of Black freedom, a continuity that the court breaks under an alleged non-racial democratic abstraction.

George Will, the conservative columnist, thinks that the re-election of the five Black incumbents is "Good News." In his opinion it is proof that America does not "require remedial government" and does not need liberals encouraging "identity politics." He also adds that the "Civil Rights Movement was futile" because it created an "obsession with race."

On the contrary, the nation's "obsession with race" existed long before the Civil Rights Movement and can be found in the U.S. Constitution. Will is concerned with the hold that the Black masses have on Black politicians. The 1995 decision of the Supreme Court invalidating the Black majority congressional districts essentially weakens that hold.

BLACK MASSES PRESSURE LEADERS

In other words, the African-American politician, if he or she is to keep office, has to perform more as an ideal bourgeois politician, minimizing and manipulating the race and class conflicts in the interest of capitalism. The Supreme Court's decision finding "racial gerrymandering" defines this new relationship between Black leaders and Black masses. It is countered by the internal pressure of African-American masses to radicalize Black leadership, in other words, to force them into an open political fight against poverty, unemployment, bad housing and police brutality.

This has caused a dilemma for urban Black politicians: While they maintain that things will change, their constituencies shake their heads in doubt. They have waited too long for a change. Their doubts lead not to hopelessness nor cynicism, but express a desire for a new reality.

This was dramatically revealed when CIA Director Deutch last month told a Black audience in South Central Los Angeles that the CIA had no connection with the sale of crack cocaine in their community. His disclaimer was met over and over again with questions asking: "Why should we trust the CIA." This was followed by the explosive revolt of Black youth against murder by police in St. Petersburg, Fla.

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Cops attack Uhuru House

St. Petersburg, Fla.—Since the Oct. 24 rebellion broke out after Tyron Lewis was murdered here, the police attacks on the community and the Uhuru Movement have intensified. Police have come to the Uhuru house just to harass us, saying things like, "We're Mark Furman," and members are arrested for passing out flyers.

At 8:00 p.m. the cops go to Bethel Heights and Jordan Park housing projects and say you can't go out, not even to go to work. They go every night and beat and arrest people just sitting on the porch.

On Nov. 13 the chief of police, Darrell Stevens, ordered the police to sweep Uhuru people off the streets before and after the Grand Jury verdict came out which let the killer cop off. In one case, 27 members of the Green-Team Swat Team arrested an Uhuru member for a minor traffic violation. Others were arrested and some were singled out and pepper-sprayed.

That night we had our weekly meeting at the Uhuru house. When those of us outside were attacked with pepper spray, people started coming out of their homes to see what was happening. The cops barricaded the streets and told the people they would be arrested if they went into the meeting. "We declare this meeting an unlawful assembly. You have five minutes to leave the building" and 30 seconds later, they fired tear gas. They used all the tear gas they had in the whole city of St. Petersburg. There were babies in there. Three-month-olds couldn't breathe. "It was like war." That's what the people were saying. It was terrible.

After that, they shot tear gas into a tree near the building and set it on fire. They were trying to burn down our building. The community tried to put it out, and were hit with canisters. They had bruises. The cops did burn down one house and one auto car place whose owner was a witness to Tyron's murder.

We had to stay in safe houses because we were afraid of being attacked. My four-year-old daughter was there. I try to counsel her, but I'm a mother, not a counselor.

We've been sick and scared. The Sheriff's Department crank calls us saying all sorts of racist things. The media also attacks us. We formed a coalition of African leadership to defend the African community and the Uhuru movement. The idea is that if they put one in jail, we'll all go. The coalition consists of churches, community activists, and business owners.

We know they intended to kill us on Nov. 13, but the community protected us by throwing rocks and bottles. We are demanding amnesty for all arrested on Oct. 24 and Nov. 13 and for all those arrested in the police sweeps that have happened every day since the 24th. We want them to jail the killer cops and to make reparations, for the family.

—Kinara

NYC unions and workfare

New York—The Workers' Rights Board of New York City Jobs with Justice, an organization which exposes work place abuses, conducted "hearings" on the Work Experience Program (New York's workfare) before a crowd of 350, Nov. 20. Eight WEP workers discussed their experiences and called for an end to the "slave labor" they must endure in order to receive meager government assistance.

Carmen Balesh and Sandra White described the dirty, unsafe and inhuman conditions of WEP workers assigned to the Sanitation Department to sweep the streets (see November N&L). White said, "They make it clear it's not job training, it's just to get your check. And it's not good for our bodies or our minds."

A fire department employee said many WEP workers have skills and are doing jobs that normally pay up to \$30,000. This not only saves money but scares regular workers from speaking out on the job. WEP workers, who work part-time at the rate of minimum wage to receive their assistance of cash and food stamps, can lose these "jobs" and welfare if they fail to come to work when ordered or to obey a command. "If the military can't protect its people from abuse," she said, "who will protect WEP workers?"

Epy Reyes does social work at a juvenile center. "I'm accepted by the other workers," he said. "The only problem is that I'm not paid." He receives \$109 every two weeks for himself and his daughter.

Ken Perez of the Communication Workers of America explained the economics of workfare for the city which has eliminated 22,100 regular jobs. A full-time clerical worker costs the city \$12.32 an hour plus benefits; a WEP worker with two children working 20 hours a week costs the City \$1.80 an hour (25% of the total) and no benefits. This figure will soon go down under the new federal and state laws to 30 hours work per week at 53¢ an hour.

Brenda Corbett receives \$214 every two weeks for her WEP work. The person working next to her gets \$12 per hour. "Welfare recipients are humiliated by people who say we just sit around, when in fact we're working and not getting paid for it. The money I receive is barely enough to care for my family. What kind of slavery is that?" In spite of a system designed to prevent it, she says. "I'm determined to get my education and won't let anyone tell me I can't, even though I need roller skates to do everything I do."

Brenda Stewart of WEP Workers Together! declared, "We're not going to be victims anymore. We're going to fight for our rights, including comparable wages, advancement and benefits. We're going from job site to job site to let all WEP workers know they are entitled to these things." WWT!'s larger demands include regular, permanent jobs and assistance for four years of college.

Brian McLaughlin, president of the New York City Central Labor Council, decried the WEP workers' exploitation and promised to work on the issue, but he was the one person in the room who has the power to stop it, and he has done nothing. If the municipal unions refused to permit WEP workers to replace laid-off city workers and to perform "union" work for slave wages, there could be a unity of employed and unemployed workers that would shake the work place at its core. As it is, the unions are perpetuating the stigma of being a welfare recipient and dividing the workers, hurting all.

—Anne Jaclard

Black Memphis vs. toxic Defense Depot

Memphis, Tenn.—I am the executive director of Defense Depot of Memphis, Tenn., Concerned Citizens Committee (DDMT-CCC). We formed it because in our community we're living on a toxic waste dump. The Defense Depot is a military base in the middle of the Black community in south Memphis.

In January 1995 I received a three-month-old newsletter from the Depot. It talked about all the chemicals spilled on the ground and getting in the groundwater. That same month, my grandmother became ill with cancer. She died on June 25, 1995. I lost my grandfather ten months later. I was wondering if there was a connection to the things in that newsletter. I went to the library to do research on the Defense Depot.

The Army had been dumping at the Depot for 54 years. The newsletter told of a RAB (Restoration Advisory Board) meeting. These boards are set up wherever there is a military base closure. The Depot is slated for closure in 1997. I tried to find out when there was going to be another meeting. I couldn't—the "public" meetings were secret!

After reading the public health assessment, by the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry I knew we had a problem because there were things they were trying to cover up. I had done the research in the library, so I was anxious to try to get to one of their meetings.

I could never get a date of the meetings, so I scheduled a PTA meeting, called Joyce Peterson of Channel 5 and told her we may have a cancer cluster. In October 1995 she did an interview with the community near the Defense Depot. With other neighbors coming forward, we said we should have a meeting, and on Oct. 16, about 350 people came.

Some of the community had been informed, but the west side had been left out. We decided we would organize the east, west, north and south. We had a meeting later that week and named ourselves DDMT-CCC. We put a person on the RAB from the group so we could know what was going on with the Defense Depot.

We know that every time it rains, high amounts of

lead are washed out into the community. There are eight schools around the Depot. High levels of lead, arsenic, chromium, zinc and dieldrin were all found on the playground at Dunn Elementary School. A young lady who was three months pregnant was jogging on the Depot in 1980. Her baby was born dead with the organs on the outside. A co-worker's baby was born with webbed feet and fingers. The babies of four others who worked there lived only a few months.

Elderly people were at a hearing screaming at Jeff Kelum, who wrote the public health assessment report, that no one had called and asked them about their families' health. The majority of people have lost more than one person in their household. The cancer rate in this section is twice as high as in the county as a whole, and in the state of Tennessee is second only to Oak Ridge—the location of a federal uranium enrichment plant.

From 1942 to 1966 the Depot had an open pit burning chemicals and waste every day. They may have known better, but this is a Black community, so who cares?

The mayor and businesses look at the Depot and see a gold mine. They want to rush "redevelopment." They're going to lease the land, and the businesses will be responsible for cleanup. If a company gets in that place, it never will get cleaned up. FedEx is leasing over there right now.

They justify leaving the community out of the decision-making as though we won't understand the technology. Before you make any decision on cleanup, you need the impacted community sitting at the table. That's one of the reasons why I've started going to all the meetings, even out of state, and learning from other military sites.

The environmental justice movement is not just for Blacks, it's for people of color and rural and poor whites. They're getting treated just like the Blacks. I've been to Benton, Ky., and Carbondale, Ill., and the stories I heard were tragic. We've got to put our heads together and stop this.

—Doris Bradshaw

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INTERNATIONAL MARXIST-HUMANISTS

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Zaire in the grip of Africa's greatest post-colonial crisis

(Continued from page 1)

set for a fresh escalation of the crisis. The Banyamulenge, who had lived in the Mulenge mountains in the eastern Kivu region of Zaire for 200 years, have suffered under government repression since the 1980s when Mobutu tried to strip them of their Zairean citizenship. Ironically, it was the Hutu extremists in the refugee camps who once again began to foment the kind of anti-Tutsi ethnic hatred which resulted in the 1994 genocide that drew the current rebel response which has routed the Hutu militias, the Zairean Army, and now threatens to topple the Mobutu government.

Hutu militias had driven Zairean Tutsis out of the Masisi and Rutshuru region in an ethnic cleansing campaign that involved a massacre at Masisi. The Rwandan government saw in the Masisi massacre a second phase of genocide that the international community would, as it did in 1994, again wring its hands in helplessness over. So, this time the initiative came from the Africans themselves to do something about the imminent disaster. Kabila's Alliance, backed by the Rwandan government, accomplished what the UN and western powers could not—the separation of the Hutu militias from the Rwandan Hutu refugees whom they had used as hostages. Alliance guerrillas have created a corridor for some 500,000 returning refugees who have crossed over into Rwanda after 2½ years of exile. Another 100,000 remain displaced in Zaire, and 535,000 remain in massive refugee camps in Tanzania. For the most part, the process of repatriation is underway, and Rwanda has liberated its border from Zairean-backed Hutu incursions.

CONVERGING LEVELS OF CRISIS

To piece together the chaotic mosaic of Central Africa, and the centrifugal forces pulling it apart, we have to examine, however briefly, three converging levels at which the crisis is being played out, namely, the regional, historical, and the global.

In October, at the end of his tenure as U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher finally made his first trip to Africa. Despite being the most crisis-ridden and economically devastated continent on the planet, Christopher could offer nothing more than a proposal for creating a 10,000-man African peacekeeping military force to be bankrolled by the U.S. Thirty-six years after the U.S. sponsored the deployment of the same kind of "peacekeeping" force to the Congo, under the auspices of the UN, present day Zaire (formerly the Belgian Congo) is convulsed by a crisis that is again pulling it apart.

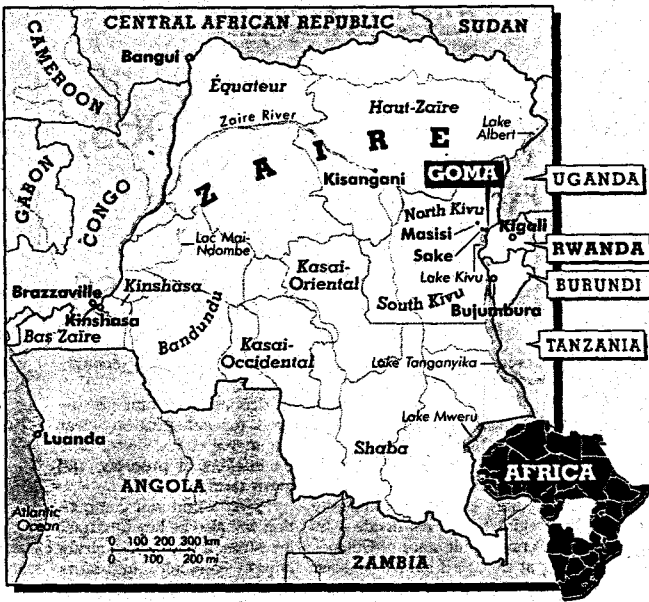
The UN intervention in the 1960 Congo crisis, and the CIA-backed murder of the radical nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba, represented a new form of Cold War struggle between the two superpowers, the U.S. and the Soviet Union. At the time, Frantz Fanon saw that "It is not true to say that the UN fails because the cases are difficult. In reality the UN is the legal card used by the imperialist interests when the card of brute force has failed."

Nevertheless, it was "Lumumba," wrote Raya Dunayevskaya, then, "who, across tribal lines, had built up a truly national movement for independence." While it is also true that the anti-colonial revolution Lumumba led was betrayed by Africans themselves, and that inde-

pendent African nations like Nkrumah's Ghana ended up sending troops to participate in a "peacekeeping" force in the Congo that legitimized the imperialist counter-revolution, it is not true that the high point of the multi-ethnic national struggle singled out by Dunayevskaya perished with Lumumba.

When local Zairean officials tried to expel Zairean Tutsis this year at the instigation of Hutu extremists, they stirred up old revolutionary forces going back to the original Congo crisis of the early 1960s, forces who have never stopped fighting the imperialist-backed Mobutu regime. Some of them, like Laurent Kabila, were followers of the late Marxist revolutionary Pierre Mulele, who had been Minister of Education and Art in Lumumba's cabinet, and represented the Parti de la Solidarite Africaine. As one African Marxist-Humanist observer noted:

There is a historical background to the situation in Central Africa that has been dominated by Pan-African sentiment. It is no accident that Uganda is deeply involved. Only a big military offensive, like the one France wants to engineer, can stop the war from getting to Kinshasa, now that it is in Rwanda and Uganda's Pan-Africanist backyard. The Lumumba forces [Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces] have their last chance of survival.



ing. And as the U.S. is bound to see it as a war in which it is losing ground, I don't believe it will give up without venturing. However, I am not in anyway saying that these are the forces that are going to bring about a revolutionary change in the region.

PAN-AFRICANIST BACKYARD

The Ugandan regional connection is pivotal. Three years ago President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda hosted a Pan-African Congress at which the then-exiled RPF was quite prominent. Museveni, who is descended from Tutsis, came to power in 1986 in a military campaign strongly supported by exiled Rwandan Tutsis. With Museveni's support these Rwandan exiles fought a bitter four year war, 1990 to 1994, with the Hutu-dominated regime of Juvenal Habyarimana. It was only through their intervention that the 1994 genocide of 1 million Tutsis and moderate Hutus in Rwanda was halted.

Both OAU (Organization of African Unity) Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim and Ugandan President

Museveni, have denounced the July military coup that replaced Burundian President Ntibantunganya with retired Colonel Pierre Buyoya, head of the Tutsi-dominated Union for Progress and National Unity (UPRONA). Sanctions against Buyoya's junta, drawn up by former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, appointed by the OAU to mediate the conflicts in Rwanda and Burundi, gained momentum when Uganda and Rwanda joined in.

The history of Burundi's regional role in the crisis is also pivotal, and is inseparable from that of Rwanda. Throughout the post-colonial history of Hutus and Tutsis checking the perceived political advantage of one another, Rwanda and Burundi have degenerated into a logic of preemptive violence, meeting massacre with massacre. Extremist propaganda and rumor became, in short order, the vehicles for mobilizing ethnic hysteria, fear, and paranoia. Tens of thousands of Hutus and Tutsis were massacred and made refugees in the 1970s and 80s as a consequence of this logic of ethnic terror.

The genocide in Burundi in October 1993, following the assassination of Melchior Ndadaye, Burundi's first democratically elected Hutu president, foreshadowed the Rwanda genocide of 1994. Like Rwanda, the Burundi genocide was carried out against Tutsis, and against Hutu moderates who had sought to forge a multiethnic unity across tribal lines. Burundi, however, has seen genocidal onslaughts on the majority Hutu population by the Tutsi-dominated military both before and since 1993.

For its part, the Zairean military is plagued less by ethnic chauvinism than by a deep-running class disaffection with Zaire's corrupt elite, which is why Zairean troops have fled rebel advances. Made up of poor peasants and workers, most of Zaire's rank-and-file army has not been paid in three years. "We do not have any reason to fight," said one Zairean soldier after arriving in Uganda. "We do not have a central command and we have not heard from our bosses in three years."

ZAIRE IN THE CRUCIBLE OF CRISES

The threat of dismember has always stalked Zaire. As the site of Africa's first major crisis of decolonization in 1960 when it was still the Belgian Congo, it has always been wracked by centrifugal forces pulling at it. Here too a perverse logic has been at work since a CIA-sponsored army sergeant by the name of Mobutu assumed power in 1965. In fact, so much has Mobutu's tenure in power depended on manipulating and suppressing Zaire's political and ethnic divisions, through use of a corrupt military establishment, there is neither the political will nor the military capability to fend off the present rebel onslaught.

Western powers have been the guarantor of Mobutu's rule and his survival against external threat. During the Cold War, the U.S. supported Mobutu, fearful that Russia would get its hands on Zaire's rich mineral resources, Israel supplied his body guard, and France and Morocco intervened twice militarily to save him. In the Southern African region, Mobutu helped launch the civil war in Angola, in the 1970s, by sending troops to aid the UNITA warlord Jonas Savimbi. Since then UNITA has used Zaire as a safe haven, and the U.S. has used it as a secret conduit to funnel arms to Savimbi.

Forced by the West and a democracy movement at home to democratize some aspects of the Zairean state in the early 1990s, Mobutu still controlled the political apparatus of the state through undermining opposition Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, and then hand-picking Zaire's current western-favored prime minister, Leon Kengo wa Dondo. Kengo, whose father is Polish and mother Rwandan Tutsi, was chosen by Mobutu because he represents no political threat. Though he is the West's favorite to replace Mobutu, due to his ethnic heritage Kengo is barred from becoming president by Zaire's narrow nationalistic constitution.

Virulent chauvinistic tendencies have surfaced since the crisis began, aimed at Kengo and other Zairean Tutsis. Zairean students have held demonstrations demanding Kengo's ouster because they believe his Tutsi ethnic background makes him a sympathizer of the Banyamulenge rebels. A man obsessed with stability in the region to insure a climate for western capitalist investment, Kengo wa Dondo is western capitalism's point man in Zaire.

He led an unsuccessful bid to privatize Zaire's copper and diamond industry for the British-South African mega-mining conglomerate Anglo-American last year. Anglo-American's privatization plans are also intertwined with the secessionist aims of Kasai and Shaba, the regions where Zaire's diamond and copper industries are most productive. Kengo's bid failed because Mobutu and the World Bank objected to the privatization of the country's main industries.

Although France has been the big political player in Central Africa, Britain dominates the economy of the region. Anglo-American and its subsidiaries depend heavily upon Kengo to keep Zaire's vast mineral wealth in its hands. In December, the magazine *African Business* reported that, the Kengo government granted an Anglo-American subsidiary, Cluff Mining Ltd., majority rights over the exploitation of the gold concessions in the Lake Kivu area, the storm center of the present refugee crisis and military conflict.

Thus, even so simple an imperialist transaction as this underscores why the convergence of the political and the economic, the local and the global, the military and the diplomatic, and the historical and the contemporary, in the Central African crisis cannot be viewed except in their dialectical totality, if we are to grasp the possibility of revolutionary new beginnings emerging from such a manifold crisis.

Capitalist science lethal to our future

by Franklin Dmitryev

Our Stolen Future: Are We Threatening Our Fertility, Intelligence, and Survival?—A Scientific Detective Story, by Theo Colborn, Dianne Dumanoski, and John Peterson Myers (Dutton, 1996).

This important new book's title refers to its contention that our future, as individuals and as society, is being undermined by synthetic chemicals that disrupt the body's hormone system. From the remotest Pacific island to the high arctic, all human beings and almost all animals carry a load of synthetic chemicals such as PCBs and DDT. They are the legacy of our current system of production.

One of the book's strengths is the picture it draws of how science operates. A chapter is devoted to "The Cancer Paradigm" which the authors consider the greatest conceptual barrier to recognizing the threat from hormone disruption. An "obsession with cancer" prevents scientists and regulators from considering other kinds of potential effects of substances.

Another recurring theme is our vast ignorance about the consequences of chemicals and other technologies due not only to scientific orthodoxy but to businesses' hoarding of knowledge under the pretext of "trade secrets." One wishes the authors had asked what is the source of this perversion of science—which is supposed to be the search for truth—into an orthodoxy resistant to new evidence and new ideas?

The transformation of the world by 20th century technology is a "global experiment," the authors declare, "with humanity and all life on Earth as the unwitting subjects." The very fabric of post-World War II society is woven around synthetic chemicals. For example, plastic has penetrated "every corner of our lives," including food packaging, sometimes causing hormone disruption.

To redesign the products and processes of industrial production, distribution and other arenas of the whole

society is a daunting task. Yet *Our Stolen Future* sees it as a necessity.

Clearly the book is more than an expose. The authors insist that "the framing of a problem limits solutions more than a lack of ingenuity or technology." This point captures a basic problem so well that it describes the authors' own barrier. Their concern is with "the problems technology has created" and with human "hubris" in using it. Left out are social relations and the forces that drive technology in certain directions.

The authors liken modern industrial society to an aircraft hurtling through the dark without instruments. Given our ignorance, they ask, should we stop, slow down, or press ahead? But how can we answer without facing the deeper question: What is the social dynamic that keeps us in the dark yet at the same time forces us to press ahead ever faster?

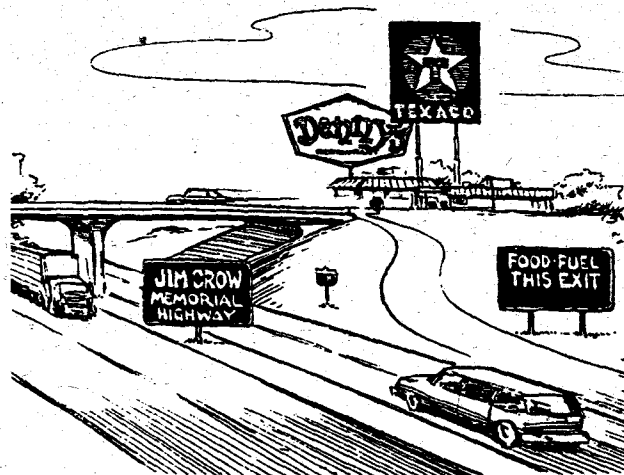
Without uprooting the capitalist system, there is no escape from capital's relentless drive to accumulate, to which all else is subordinated. What Marx showed 130 years ago, that "Capital is reckless of the health and length of life of the laborer, unless under compulsion from society," extends to the disregard of all life.

Our Stolen Future concludes that "the time has come to shift the discussion to the global experiment itself," and to "begin a broad discussion" of "the unavoidable question of whether to stop manufacturing and releasing synthetic chemicals altogether." This is vital, yet at the same time the "global experiment" must not be conceived as independent of the social system of which it is an integral part.

The root of the problem can be found not in technology alone but in the totality of human relationships, activities and concepts. That is what needs to be transformed for technology to enhance and not erode human potential.

Editorial

Racist and sexist 'military-industrial' complex



The Texaco tapes were just that proof, and the settlement seems to institute an affirmative action program.

If proof of discrimination doesn't arise, companies have found that a track record of supposedly good intentions like sensitivity and diversity programs can substitute for real hiring and advancement of women and minorities. The Texaco tapes convey executives derisively talking about "black jelly beans," an analogy borrowed from diversity training sessions. The settlement at Texaco may turn out to be more "good intentions."

The blue-collar shade of racial and age discrimination came out when Black workers sued mega-publisher R.R. Donnelley and Sons in November. "I worked for Donnelley for 19 years and never was more than a temporary," one man bitterly explained as he and others picketed corporate headquarters in Chicago on Dec. 2.

"You work for 23 months and 29 days and then they lay you off. They'll hire you back as a temporary again in

a month. I lost years of service time and couldn't get vacation benefits or pension benefits. I worked all over, in the bindery, shipping, you name it and to say they worked the temporaries hard is an understatement." White workers on the other hand regularly cleared the two-and-a-half-year period for achieving job security and vesting in company benefits.

WOMEN'S FIGHT AGAINST THE ARMY

The current Army scandal broke when female recruits came forward with complaints of sexual assault and harassment at the Aberdeen Proving Ground near Baltimore, a training center for technical jobs in the Army. Nineteen men of superior rank to the women under them have been charged with those offenses as well as with "sexual misbehavior." This scandal exposed others at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri, Fort Jackson in South Carolina, and Lackland Air Force Base in Texas.

Some women had to overcome death threats to expose their superiors in the current scandal. Their charges also helped expose the institutional protection afforded to rapists and harassers in the past. In some instances, women who complained were silenced and even expelled from the military, accused of being lesbians under Clinton's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

The reports out of Aberdeen and other facilities show that the Navy's Tailhook cover-up was no aberration—no more so than conditions at Mitsubishi's Normal, Ill., auto plant where current and former women employees recently sued the company for fostering sexual harassment. Each situation likewise shows the sexist greeting women have received in formerly male worlds they have entered out of necessity.

The present scandals involve working-class youth forced into the military in search of economic security. Under the rubric of an "all-volunteer Army," a poverty draft since 1973 has ensured a successful reservoir of enlistments when draft resistance and military revolts during the Vietnam War made conscription unviable.

Extending the poverty draft to women widened the base of recruitment. But while official promises of training, advancement, and even personal growth have drawn masses of young women into the armed forces, they have found no haven from subservience and domination. In a 1991 survey, fully 10% of women in the armed services reported that they had been raped and 55% reported they have been harassed sexually.

The Texaco and Army incidents strike a nerve so deep that they lend new meaning to "military-industrial complex." Texaco Chairman Peter I. Bijur admits the 1994 tapes showed just the tip of the iceberg, and military planners wring their hands over what they see as an unavoidable tension between modernization versus discipline with women participating in the services.

Such supposedly honest insights won't relieve the system of its authoritarian prerogatives translated into racism and sexism which a system in crisis breeds for its survival. Those women and men, soldiers and workers fed up with the military-industrial racist and sexist complex can point in a different direction.

Threat of Netanyahu

The irresponsible decision taken by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to open the tunnel beneath the Al-Aqsa Mosque was a step towards declaring war on the Palestinians and to destroying the Oslo Accords.

For the last three years, the Israeli government has been continuously encircling Jerusalem. The Mayor of Jerusalem, the fanatical right-winger Ehud Olmert, has ceased issuing any building licenses for new houses while at the same time he continues to demolish Arab houses, to pave roads to the Gush Etzion settlement and to continue with other moves to Judaize Jerusalem and eradicate its Arab identity.

At the international level too, Netanyahu has succeeded in increasing political tension, in particular with the Islamic and Arab world. He has closed the door of negotiation with Syria and Lebanon, and introduced a new element of strain in Israeli relations with Jordan and Egypt. He has driven the area to a state of dangerous volatility which not only threatens the future of its population, Israelis included, but seems destined to lead to a final and all-engulfing war.

Netanyahu is a threat to both Arabs and Jews, a past master in political deception and underhanded dealings. Anyone who reads his book *A Place under the Sun* will immediately discover the real, discriminatory face of Netanyahu. Throughout the book's 400 pages he repeatedly emphasizes his hatred for the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular. In his eyes, the PLO will never be anything more than a terrorist organization. It will never gain his recognition. Further, he does not disguise his objection to the national rights of the Palestinians, especially the right of self-determination.

The bloody confrontations have reawakened the peace camp in Israel which has constantly been demanding that the Israeli government stop its criminal policies which endanger the whole peace process.

I address these remarks to my Palestinian brothers and sisters, emphasizing that we, the Israeli supporters of peace, stand by you to work hand in hand in this struggle to save the peace process. Netanyahu has declared war upon you and we in turn have declared war upon him. Our aim will not be fulfilled until Netanyahu has resigned for the sake of peace between both our peoples. Victory will undoubtedly be ours.

—Latif Dori

Latif Dori is the head of the Committee for Israeli-Palestinian Dialogue, founded by Israelis of Eastern Origin.

VOICES FROM WITHIN THE PRISON WALLS

Support George Skatzes!

In 1993 there occurred an 11-day uprising at the Lucasville penitentiary in Lucasville, Ohio, over dehumanizing conditions during which two inmate informants and one guard lost their lives. George Skatzes acted as a spokesman for the prisoners at considerable risk to his own life in order to effect a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

His efforts saved the lives of prisoners and guards alike. As a result of his efforts, he has been sentenced to death. He refused to inform on the actual perpetrators of the deaths just to "get a lighter sentence." However, the actual perpetrators of the deeds (two known snitches) lied to prosecutors to ensure lighter sentences for themselves. They stated that Skatzes had ordered the murders.

Former guard hostage Jeffery Ratcliff asked that jurors spare George's life and stated under oath that George protected two guards and released one badly injured guard to receive medical treatment. He also said he would not be alive today were it not for George.

Skatzes was given a death sentence for daring to stand up against the tyranny of the state. He languishes on death row awaiting execution while the states' two inmate snitches reside in safety as a result of their treachery and collusion with the authorities.

Please help to do justice to this man who is a victim of this injustice system. His sister has helped form a defense committee for her brother. Anyone interested in making a financial contribution or organizing support should write to her:

Mrs. Jackie Bowers
P.O. Box 1591
Marion, OH 43301-1591

—Prisoner
Huntsville, Texas

'Factories with fences'

Currently it costs more to imprison a person for one year than to send him or her to Harvard University. While this country faces an economic crisis and has slashed basic social services for Third World and poor people, it has poured billions of dollars into the criminal justice system.

Ominously, new plans such as prison-for-profit options are being developed. Using the slogan "Factories with fences," Warren Burger, former U.S. Supreme Court justice, has publicly called for the dismantling of present rules governing prisoner-made goods and advocates the privatization of prisons and making prisons into profit-generating enterprises.

In the coming years we may see textile plants, foundries, and even high-tech industries springing forth in and around prisons. These industries will super-exploit prisoners as laborers and yield super-profits. Already the prison system contracts out prison labor to the state, military, and private industry at near-slave wages. (Federal prisoner wages begin at 22 cents per hour.) Along the way, in 1984, after 14 years of Congressional wrangling, the Sentencing Reform Act was passed to institute longer terms and stricter parole.

After all of this they wonder about the changes in prisoners who are marching out of those slave camps with

the slogan "All power to the people" and acting like Stokely Carmichael, Bobby Seale, Huey Newton, Angela Davis and others whose political beliefs put American civilization on trial.

Here in Illinois a Black representative from the 26th District of the state of Illinois, Peggy Smith Martin, openly stated that Illinois prisons are festering with racism. Resident development and rehabilitation in the true sense of the words were the exception. Extreme disciplinary action was found to be more emphasized than preparation for return to the outside community.

Also a former Black warden of the Joliet old prison, Mr. Charles A. Felton, told the *Chicago Sun-Times*: "The actual truth about the Illinois prison system is that it tends to reward incompetence and brutality and stifles creativity and humaneness."

COLOR OF THE LAW

Here in Menard they are systemically killing the prisoner's mind and body, and all is done under the color of the law. We have been on lockdown for over four months and after the shakedown here, I found my cell clean of most of my personal property—fan, radio, television, a carpet, a back brace, cassette tapes, an old stamp photo book. I do not see how any of those things are threatening to the prison population or staff. They even took the chairs so that now we have to sit on our beds.

I'm a veteran and a part of the incarcerated veterans program we have here—or I should say had here because they took my veteran's t-shirt and P.O.W. pin, and I'm told that I'll have to mail them to my family because these things do not go along with the program they have in mind: crime and punishment.

The new law cries for crime and punishment, but I do not see what that has to do with me and other prisoners who have done 25 years or more and received our time under the "old" law of "rehabilitation." I was not convicted under this new law of hate, crime and punishment, but I'm being treated as such.

The Illinois Supreme Court overturned a similar law in 1990, saying it violated *ex post facto* laws to deny a prisoner a hearing on an annual basis. I believe that denying over and over again a parole for a crime that happened 30 years ago is or really should be unconstitutional. When the prisoner is no longer the criminal but becomes the victim of a crime, it does not help him change his lifestyle or his way of thinking. It can only make him become like that which is attacking him, a person of hate and a crime being done under the color of the law.

'INTERCOMMUNICATION BETWEEN AGES'

The Clinton and Gore administration is asking for more policemen, an open war on crime, safe streets and new laws for crime control. All of the above is just like the Reagan-Bush administration; crime in the streets and prisoners are used to put fear into people, and the really needed programs are never worked on. Crime is a problem but it's not the real problem, as one really should be worried about those rulers of the world who are now leading us to a nuclear holocaust.

As the author of a very beautiful book I'm reading stated, "Death here becomes a beacon to the future. The intercommunication between the ages will continue, until a new, liberated world is born." Let's have this kind of debate in the spring of 1997.

—Prisoner
Menard, Illinois

Youth

African youth at mercy of structural adjustment

by Kevin Michaels

The African revolutions of the post-war decades re-drew the map of the world. As we approach the end of the twentieth century though, the reality is that Africa is now falling off that map. International capital will not invest there and the governments of the industrialized lands, as the recent events in Zaire show, are increasingly willing to cast a blind eye on the crises that, because of their utter enormity, manage to penetrate the blanket of media obscurity which lays over the continent. Africa's people are under the duress of a system unconcerned with human need and, without question, African children bear the brunt of the suffering.

It is almost gratuitous to list the horrors the children of Africa are confronted with. They are press ganged into the militias of armed conflicts, they face malnutrition, they are forced to labor in sweatshops, or, in an effort to gain some control over their lives, they take to city streets to eke out a tenuous existence one step ahead of both the police and those who would victimize them. Perhaps most ominously for the future, the number of African children who have lost one or both parents to AIDS, called the "The Grandmother's Disease" because extended family members are forced to provide care for those orphaned, is approaching two million.

To contend that the governments of Africa and the world's network of donor agencies are simply ignoring the continent's conditions would be wrong. The question is how they view the context of the problem. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) held a conference in Dakar, Senegal in November of 1992 devoted entirely to children's issues. OAU members, UNICEF and 18 donor countries signed on to a document called the "Consensus of Dakar," a plan to channel aid to African countries to strengthen domestic budgets for children. At the 1995 UN women's conference in Beijing as well, children's issues were on the agenda. Yet the agendas of Dakar and Beijing must be viewed in the light of objective conditions, specifically the economic discipline imposed by capitalism.

Since the world economic crisis of the early seventies, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have assumed leading roles in keeping the poor nations



Conflicts displace many African youth

of the world in line with the dictates of the rulers of the rich ones. The primary means by which this has been accomplished is the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), a comprehensive list of economic demands a country must adhere to in order to receive aid. Typical strictures include drastic reductions in government spending, the introduction of high interest rates and policies to discourage independent labor activity. The net effect of the SAP is, without exception, to inflate prices while driving down wages, in short, to make workers and peasants pay the cost of forcing the economy of their country into the confines of the plan of international capital. Ghana, Zambia and Zimbabwe are just three African countries where textbook SAPs have been implemented.

Despite what development agencies, Scandinavian donor countries and individuals concerned about the people of Africa might wish for, no amount of aid offered within the context of international capital's limitations will assist Africa in overcoming the ravages of colonialism and the yoke that persisting neocolonial relations represent. Even South Africa's historic transition to majority rule has left little more than unfulfilled expectations of betterment in its wake.

What is needed in this era of retrogression is a return to the breadth and boldness of those revolutions which brought Africa to the world's attention, yet a return which will go beyond the limitations, both internal and external, that they encountered. Youth will no doubt be at the forefront of this return.

In Senegal for instance, a country in which 40% of children between the ages of 10 and 14 labor as domestics, porters and other types of workers, the child laborers of Dakar have formed their own independent organization. Among other demands, the young workers insist that they have the right to play, rest, read and write. They have also raised funds to pay for the medical bills

of a young domestic worker who was thrown off the fourth story of a building by her boss, who accused her of stealing.

The structural adjustment that world capital demands of Africa is a life and death question for humanity. The revolutionary reconstruction of Africa, beginning with its youth, is the only thing that will bring it back onto the map. Recent events have shown that change for the continent may come sooner than later and, as revolutionaries aware of the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa, our responsibility is to solidarize with those who want to bring about a truly human future.

Ogoni struggle continues

San Jose, Cal.—While the Nigerian capitalist generals think they have silenced Ken Saro-Wiwa by brutally murdering him, the organization and the movement of which he was a part live on. Noble Obani-Nwibari, vice-president of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, his voice powerful with rage and sadness, proclaimed, "I can die a righteous man, because I have stood up and told the multinational Shell Oil Co., your actions are inimical to my people."

Before a rapt audience of students and faculty at San Jose State University on Nov. 14, Obani-Nwibari detailed the 38-year history of exploitation, "agony and genocide" that the "unfortunate" discovery of oil brought to Ogoniland. He noted that as a direct result of scientists, technology, and capitalist wealth, the life expectancy of the Ogoni has plummeted, demonstrating once again Marx's saying that "to have one basis for science, and another for life, is a priori a lie."

Most inspiring were his accounts of how the Ogoni have fought back, demanding self-determination and a clean environment as the basis for all other freedoms. Historically, the Ogoni resistance sparked other Nigerian peoples and freedom movements.

The dialectic of multiethnicity, in both its particularity and universality, was heard in the voice of the martyr Ken Saro-Wiwa, from a letter smuggled out of his prison cell in January of 1995. He told his people that together "we have seen tomorrow, and there is an Ogoni star in the sky."

Obani-Nwibari, while demanding continuation of the boycott of Shell, also encouraged the youth of the world to be a "generation of action and a generation to express your mind."

—Jennifer Pen

Remember Eric Smith

On April 9, 1996, while his family watched in horror, Eric Smith was killed by Forest View, Ill., police. He was severely beaten and shot six times. Eric's family is taking legal action against the Village of Forest View, the Forest View Police Department and the officers who killed him. To reach beyond the racist police lies and media stereotypes, Eric's mother, Wanda Hogue, tells about the reality of his life and death.

As the mother of a young, Black deaf man beaten and murdered by police officers, I have one simple question. Why?

My son faced one of the most unfair hardships in life, losing his hearing at 15 months from meningitis. To not be able to hear or talk had to have been overwhelmingly frustrating. Just place yourself in his shoes for a moment. Imagine that you are unable to communicate with people except with sign language.

In spite of it all, he had the determination to succeed in life. He became very athletic, a football player. He was a championship wrestler. He traveled overseas to Bulgaria to take part in the Special Olympics. He was chosen out of a select group of students to attend Space Camp while attending Illinois School For The Deaf. He graduated with many honors and awards. A lot of the students looked up to him, calling him the gentle giant. He attended Gallaudet University in Washington D.C.

He had a very loving family. He was a big guy with a big heart. He never tried to throw his weight around. In fact, he was just the opposite; a big baby. Sensitive and loving. I will never understand why he ended up in such a horrible state.

I feel in my heart that God is going to bring something good out of this terrible tragedy. My son did not deserve what happened to him. No human being deserves this kind of treatment. He had never committed a crime in his life; yet his size, race and handicap have cost him his life. This and the police officers' brutal, ruthless and unprofessional nature. I'm starting to wonder who the real criminals are.

In Washington, D.C., in October of 1995, my son was reporting a burglary to police. Mistaken as a suspect in a crime that took place close to where he was standing, he was beaten viciously by nine police officers. They used batons, kicked and maced him and gave him a black eye. His wrist bone was broken. He was hit with a flashlight on his head, requiring six stitches. He had handcuff prints embedded in his wrists. His eye was swollen shut. It destroyed him mentally. Why? No actions have been taken against these officers.

On April 9 of this year he was on his way home from the counseling that was helping him get through all this. We had stopped alongside the highway so that I could sign and communicate with him. The officers jumped to a conclusion again. He was beaten and killed by Forest View police officers. The allegations and accusations made against my son are outrageous. So far, no one has been held responsible for this crime either. No one wants to take the blame.

I feel that this is a wake-up call. Something serious needs to be done to stop this police brutality. I hope that it doesn't take the worst to get the attention of the right people to finally take a stand to stop this violence.

Mario Savio's revolutionary generation

When the hundreds of students at the Berkeley campus of the University of California, who gathered on Nov. 6 to protest the passage of Proposition 209, learned of Mario Savio's death from a sudden heart attack that very day at the early age of 53, they vowed to continue their struggle in his name and invoked the legacy of the Free Speech Movement.

For Mario Savio's name is inextricably bound to the historic Free Speech Movement (FSM) that erupted at the end of 1964 out of the dialectic set in motion by the freedom struggles of the Black youth in the South at the beginning of that decade, when a whole new generation of revolutionaries was born.

Mario exemplified that generation as one of the students from Berkeley who returned from Mississippi where they had gone to help the Black youth in their freedom struggles only to learn that they had to fight for freedom in the North as well, when they were forbidden by the University to collect funds for the struggles in the South.

IT WAS WHEN THE POLICE attempted to arrest a member of the Congress of Racial Equality for defying that order that students spontaneously surrounded the police car and a normally quiet philosophy student, Mario Savio, took off his shoes to jump on its roof and address them, that he suddenly found himself a leader. "I don't know what made me get up and give that first speech," he said later. "What was it Kierkegaard said about free acts? They're the ones that, looking back, you realize you couldn't help doing."

In the turbulent weeks that followed, his passionate speeches from the steps of Sproul Hall engaged thousands in open discussions of where the movement was going. It was Mario who most clearly articulated in this process that the unique achievement of the FSM was raising the theory of alienation from an academic question to one that questioned the whole society. As he put it:

"America may be the most poverty-stricken country in the world. Not materially. But intellectually it is bankrupt. And morally it's poverty-stricken. But in such a way that it's not clear to you that you're poor. It's very hard to know you're poor if you're eating well..."

"Students are excited about political ideas. They're not yet inured to the apolitical society they're going to enter. But being interested in ideas means you have no use in American society...unless they are ideas which are useful to the military-industrial complex..."

"Factories are run in authoritarian fashion, nonunion factories anyway—and that's the nearest parallel to the university."

The true legacy of the FSM—where the right to free speech became a discussion about the alienation in society as a whole—is that the dialectic of revolt became inseparable from the dialectic of ideas.

WHILE MARIO'S INTERVIEWS and spontaneous speeches were widely transcribed, and reported in a diverse number of journals, the News and Letters pamphlet *The Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution* was the rare exception to his consistent reluctance to write the story of the FSM. His agreement to become a co-author meant that the story of the FSM was placed in an integral context together with the story of the Black Revolt on the one hand, and Raya Dunayevskaya's philosophic analysis on the other.

In the years after the FSM, Mario dropped out of Berkeley and earned degrees in physics from San Francisco State. He raised a family and earned his living in recent years teaching math and philosophy courses at Sonoma State. In those years, his political activity took him to many different dimensions, whether that be labor marches, women's struggles, or most recently his activities in opposition to Proposition 209.

As activist and philosopher, his life may well be said to have reached for what the philosopher Hegel called an "Individualism which lets nothing interfere with its Universalism, i.e., freedom." That legacy remains the challenge for today's revolutionaries.

History in the making of youth mobilized for freedom North and South in 1964

The Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution

INCLUDES

Mario Savio
BERKELEY SUMMER

Eugene Walker
MISSISSIPPI
FREEDOM SUMMER

Robert Moses
EDUCATION IN
THE SOUTH

Raya Dunayevskaya
THE THEORY OF
ALIENATION:
MARX'S DEBT TO
HEGEL



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Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Bill Clinton, so eager to lecture small countries about democracy, avoided any such talk at the 18-member Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in November in the Philippines. Clinton had friendly chats with Indonesian dictator Suharto who roomed down the hall from him.

Also, for the first time since the 1989 Beijing massacre, at APEC the U.S. government reached an agreement to exchange state visits with China's President Jiang Zemin, something even the Bush administration refused to do. The business of APEC was of course business, especially that of opening markets to U.S. exports and, most of all, securing a continuing supply of low-priced Asian labor for the multinational corporations.

Only weeks before APEC, China's courts handed down an incredibly harsh 11-year sentence to 1989 student protest leader Wang Dan who, since his release from an earlier four-year term in 1993, had attempted to unify dissidents from 1989 with those from the 1970s. Wei Jingsheng, one of the older dissidents, is also serving a long sentence having met briefly with Wang Dan in 1994. While on Dec. 9, Clinton welcomed China's Defense Minister Gen. Chi Haotian who oversaw the blood-bath in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Another leading dissident, Wang Xizhe, who published a Marxist critique of the Maoist system in 1973 and who has spent 16 years in Chinese prisons, managed to escape into exile. He did so just as the government was getting ready to arrest him again, this time for having

Afghanistan's Taliban

The Taliban movement has now held Kabul, Afghanistan's capital, for two months and much of the country for a year or longer. As fanatical Islamic fundamentalists, they have gone further than even the Iranian mullahs or Saudi kings in setting up a reactionary theocracy. They have outlawed even rival interpretations of Islam and have banned the following: women's education, women working outside the home, women going out without a male guardian, men without beards and almost all forms of music, television and films.

Armed and trained by longtime U.S. ally Pakistan, the Taliban are opposed by India, Russia and Iran. The latter countries back the forces of Abdul Rashid Doestam, a former Communist general whose base of support is the Uzbek minority group, and those of Ahmad Shah Massoud, a somewhat more moderate fundamentalist whose forces, drawn mainly from the Tajik minority, had controlled Kabul for the last few years. The Taliban are based among the dominant Pashtun ethnic group. In recent weeks, the Taliban have suffered reversals, but they still control Kabul.

In their first days in Kabul, the Taliban engaged in an orgy of brutality. They summarily executed Najibullah, the former Communist ruler, and displayed his visibly mutilated body. Women whose veils showed a bit of skin were severely beaten. During those first days, the U.S. government made some clear gestures of support to the Taliban before backing away when this came under criticism. Another factor to watch is whether the collapse of the Benazir Bhutto government in Pakistan will have any effect on the Taliban.

signed an appeal for the self-determination of Tibet.

While the situation in Tibet has received world attention, and rightly so, apparently serious unrest this year among the heavily Muslim population of northwest China has received less coverage. This region, which contains China's nuclear test sites, borders the newly independent Central Asian countries of the former Soviet Union with which it shares longstanding cultural links. While Chinese authorities mention only "banditry," an exile "Unified National Revolutionary Front" based in Almaty, Kazakhstan, reports the arrest of thousands of anti-Beijing activists in the northwest over the past six months.



Protesters against the imprisonment of Chinese dissident Wang Dan sat in at the Chinese embassy in Hong Kong.

French Guyana student unrest

In October and November, a series of student demonstrations, four nights of street battles with police and a general strike organized by the pro-independence Union of Guyanese Workers, forced the French government to agree to demands by high school students to release needed funds for education.

The deplorable conditions of the schools, in what is one of South America's last remaining European colonies, was underscored by the modesty of the students' demands which included adding a few hours of computer science courses and air conditioning for the history and natural science classrooms.

An account in a local Trotskyist paper, *Combat Ouvrier*, reprinted in the Paris Trotskyist paper *Lutte Ouvriere* (Nov. 22, 1996), underlined the deeper causes which included "the general degradation of the country in a climate which still stinks of colonialism. An unemployment level of 25% plunges the youth into anxiety about their future.

"The government tries to separate the high school students from other youth who looted and set fires. This is a classic tactic. But, students or not, those who participated in looting and setting fires have, above all, allowed a type of anger to explode for which the French government and the colonial administration are solely responsible."

Another border zone that needs watching is that between China and India. Jiang Zemin visited India right after APEC, the first time a modern Chinese head of state has done so. While the public talk was all about friendship and overcoming the "border disputes" that led to a Chinese invasion in 1962, many Indians outside the government expressed worry about China's designs along their 2,500-mile border.

These skeptics pointed to China's growing and nuclearly armed military and to the widening economic disparity between the two countries. Before the collapse of Communism, Chinese ambitions in the Indian subcontinent were checked by Russia, but today Russia is considerably weakened.

By now China is producing nearly half of the world's shoes. According to sociologist Anita Chan, who was able to visit shoe factories in Dongguan, an industrial zone near Hong Kong, Taiwanese factory owners have imposed military-style discipline there, part of Taiwanese capitalists' \$20-billion investment on the mainland.

At the Yu Yuan factory, workers are forced to march around like soldiers, even at meal times when they sit down and commence eating to a strict set of commands and bells. Pay is 25¢ per hour with shifts at busy times running as long as 16 hours a day, seven days a week.

Unsurprisingly, Chan notes, one sign of resistance is that "the factory's turnover rate is a high 7% a month," even though quitting means losing two weeks pay (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, Nov 17, 1996). Some factories actually use physical coercion to keep workers from quitting. Taiwanese investors say that if their labor costs become too "high" they can set up in Vietnam instead.

French truckers win strike

On Nov. 29 the French government and trucking companies caved in after a 12-day truck drivers strike and blockade of highways tied up much of the French and even the Western European economy. The heartbeat of the movement was in northern France, where highway blockades near Caen and other cities effectively shut down road traffic between England and the continent.

Despite cold nights spent sleeping in the cabs of their trucks, the drivers managed to outlast both the conservative government and the owners who came under severe pressure once oil deliveries were cut off and as auto factories began layoffs.

So deep has the discontent with Prime Minister Alain Juppe's austerity moves become that, instead of anger, strikers often received reactions like the following from a woman caught in a huge traffic jam in Caen: "Juppe has so antagonized people that we can understand [the drivers], even if they really complicate our lives" (*Le Monde*, Nov. 11, 1996). In opinion polls, fully 74% of the public expressed support for the strikers, a pattern which has held for the past year of labor struggles.

One key issue in the strike was the workers' demand to lower the retirement age from 60 to 55 after 25 years of service, something the government initially said it could never agree to. Workers also pressed successfully for changes in working conditions such as guaranteed pay for waiting time and nights away from home, and better provisions for sick pay, winning all of these from employers whose first offer was nothing except an insulting 1% raise. The test now is whether this agreement can be enforced since trucking employers have a history of reneging on contracts. Such a clear-cut labor victory is quite rare in today's retrogressive climate, one in which racism and anti-labor moves are all too common.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her recreation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas now. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

Protests in Serbia

Mass opposition demonstrations which began late last October continue to rock the regime of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. Tens of thousands have taken to the streets in the capital, Belgrade, in the cities of Nis and Bor, and in other smaller towns. Students and professors have occupied buildings in all the major universities. Protesters are now demanding that Milosevic leave office.

The demonstrations were first organized and led by the political coalition Zajedno (Together) which opposed Milosevic in recent federal parliament and local municipal elections, winning a victory in a majority of the local elections. Zajedno has a strong right-wing nationalist and even in some sectors a neo-fascist base, although the demonstrations have also drawn in other students, independent intellectuals, retired workers who do not necessarily identify with Zajedno's reactionary politics.

There is mass opposition to the economic ruin brought on by Milosevic's genocidal war against Bosnia, but no sign yet of opposition to the premise of that war—or solidarity with the Bosnian people and their struggle for a multiethnic society.

Workers voted against Milosevic's party in many local elections in order to rid themselves of corrupt local officials and in Nis have joined in the daily protests. The decision of other workers on whether or not to strike, especially the miners, could be decisive in days to come.

Milosevic has organized and mounted a propaganda campaign against the opposition. As we go to press, he has labeled all protesters "criminals," and for several days shut down the last independent mass media outlet, Radio B-92, which long ago denounced Milosevic's genocidal war against Bosnia and has reported the mass protests in minute-to-minute coverage. These moves will not stop the protests but may be a prelude to an army-police repression. The situation remains open.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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25¢

Workers fed up with long hours



by B. Ann Lastelle

The company I work for has been gobbled up by a much larger international conglomerate. This "partnership" allegedly will offer the company "the additional resources necessary to stay competitive in an industry that is consolidating rapidly." What it will mean for the workers is unclear, but I distinctly heard the representative of the new owners say that we may have to work harder, work longer hours and push out more units. We've had enough of that already.

Workers in our manufacturing unit had been told in late November that we would be working six-day weeks through January and February, but management began taking our Saturdays in December. The first was voluntary; the second, mandatory. Second shift workers proposed a plan allowing us to work most of the mandatory overtime during the week rather than coming in on Saturday. Our supervisor said she had no problem with it and would present it to the manufacturing unit manager.

We learned at the kickoff meeting the next day that the manager had rejected our proposal. Not only that. He had changed our starting time on Friday so that some of the hours we had offered to work as overtime were now regular time. It was a slap in the face, and everyone felt it. Ten people (out of 19) stated that they would not be coming in on Saturday. Under individual pressure from the unit manager the following day, however, six of those people did agree to come in, and the company was able to run the lines as scheduled.

Our rather manipulative supervisor, in the meantime, had held a second shift team meeting, which she began

(continued on page 3)

Black World

Satanic reverses of Louis Farrakhan



by Lou Turner

There is a deafening silence in Black America over the post-Million Man March, 20-nation, Africa-Middle East tour that Louis Farrakhan took in January and February. The obvious reason for the silence is that those broad sectors of Black America who were energized by the Million Man March don't want to have its meaning reversed by the world thug tour that Farrakhan just completed.

While Black leaders usually "break every which way" when asked by the white press to respond to the reactionary verses of Farrakhan's brand of fundamentalism, they have for the most part condemned the trip (Carl Rowan and Randall Robinson), or cautiously distanced themselves from it (Jesse Jackson and Kweisi Mfume). What makes the fallout more conspicuous is that, despite the popular wisdom that the Million Man March would bring Farrakhan mainstream acceptance, at Farrakhan's Savior's Day rally in Chicago on Feb. 25 the only leader he could get to be on the stage with him was his ideological sycophant and organizational go'fer, Ben Chavis.

FARRAKHAN'S GHOSTS

What these Black leaders recognize is that in the bizarre logic of American race relations, the white media and political establishment are playing out a cynical game with Farrakhan that cannot but stoke the embers of racism in the white American mind, and position African Americans in the defensive posture of having to defend Farrakhan when "they" go after him. Farrakhan relishes in admitting as much. And therein lies the tale of his Satanic (re)verses.

Following a strange bout with depression after the Million Man March, for which he retreated to his desert estate in Arizona to meditate, Farrakhan now has all the symptoms of a martyr's complex. (Something like Pat Buchanan's "they're out to get me" paranoia which is a sick reversal of his "out to get them" nativist politics of exclusion.)

In Farrakhan's case, it's the reversal of history. He shamelessly identifies the controversy over his counter-revolutionary world thug fest with the government per-

(Continued on page 8)

North and South, women fight Right's assault on poor, feminism

by Terry Moon

The U.S. Women's Liberation Movement has been a continuous force for freedom since the mid-1960s, but never has it faced such a brutal backlash bent on its destruction. That Patrick Buchanan—a racist, anti-Semitic, sexist, homophobic, anti-abortion fanatic who would prosecute a rape victim if she dared abort—won the New Hampshire Republican primary in February, underscores just how deadly serious that attack is. Yet the Women's Liberation Movement did not wait for that development before fighting back.

The opening salvo was Feminist Expo '96, a conference of over 3,200 women representing 300 organizations and individuals, that met Feb. 2-4 in Washington, D.C. Eleanor Smeal, the president of the Feminist Majority Foundation, put it bluntly to the conference: "Never before has the women's movement been so under attack, and never before has there been such a need for all segments of the women's movement to come together." No one could deny the excitement of the event—especially the overwhelming presence of young women. Fully 35% were high school and college age.

While a number of the 48 workshops had breaking into electoral politics as the subject, many of the young women wanted to go further. A University of Chicago student told *News & Letters* that though the conference expressed an urgency to confront the right wing, "It wasn't urgent enough....We're sick of working within the constraints of what exists."

Also clear from the workshops on affirmative action, poverty, ending violence against women, and welfare, as well as the significant representation of women of color



Welfare rights protests, like this one in Philadelphia, oppose Republican and Clinton's attempts to drive women and children into the night.

on panels, was the acknowledged imperative of the women's movement to make its outreach to African-American women less of a gesture and more of a reality.

In an effort to do just that, conference participants did not separate women's rights from Black rights in organizing "Freedom Summer '96," an effort to double voter registration among 19- to 24-year-olds. And a spontaneous demonstration erupted the second morning of the conference when over 500 marched for affirmative action and against the assault on the safety net for the poor.

While deep divisions remain, an indication of how serious (Continued on page 10)

Tour to free Mumia, all political prisoners

Chicago—At a moment when the American political process is dominated by rhetoric about "illegal" immigration, "lenient" prison sentences, and "a crisis in personal responsibility" as the reason for the malaise in the Black community, a very different voice was heard in the Chicago area the last week of February when Ramona Africa and Leonard Weinglass held an intensive lecture tour in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal and other political prisoners. Their tour emphasized that the ongoing national and international campaign to demand a new trial for Mumia, who was falsely accused in the 1981 murder of a Philadelphia police officer, is an integral part of resisting the increasingly reactionary nature of American politics.

Ramona Africa is the sole adult survivor of the Philadelphia Police Department's firebombing of the Black organization MOVE's headquarters in 1985 and has helped spearhead the campaign to free Mumia. Leonard Weinglass is Mumia's attorney who has long campaigned against the death penalty.

In a series of talks held at the Center for Inner City Studies, Northwestern University, Loyola University, and De Paul University, they laid out factors that led to Mumia's incarceration on death row: being too poor to afford an attorney, he was provided with a court-appointed lawyer who openly admitted to being incapable of handling the case; the presiding judge provided the lawyer with only \$450 in fees for an investigator, a pathology report, and a forensics expert, knowing full well none could be hired at such ridiculously low rates; and the prosecutor withheld such vital information as the fact that the bullet which killed the police officer could not have been fired from the gun Mumia had in his possession.

By the time they finished detailing Mumia's case, it was clear that far from being an isolated case, his story encapsulates the fate of thousands of other African-American prisoners throughout this country.

As Ramona Africa put it in her talk at Northwestern University, "One of the most dangerous things is to be in a dangerous position and not know it. Anyone here can be picked up just like Mumia was. Anyone here can

suffer the injustices of American 'justice,' just as Mumia did. This is how they treat people who stand up against the system. We do this not just for Mumia, but for ourselves. It's part of our effort to challenge an unfair system."

Weinglass noted that of the 3,000 men and women now on death row in America, many were convicted on flimsy evidence in state courts, where defendants have little or no decent legal representation and face judges elected or chosen through the support of the Fraternal Order of Police and pro-death penalty groups.

"Forty percent of all death penalties imposed at the state level are overturned in federal courts because of blatant constitutional irregularities," he said. "Yet Congress has passed legislation that will virtually eliminate the federal appeals process for death penalty cases." This will give a green light to the ongoing efforts to impose an American-style totalitarianism upon us all.

As Ramona Africa noted several times during the tour, the authorities are hoping that as Mumia's appeals process drags out, his case will gradually lose attention and cease to be a focal point of opposition to the criminal (in)justice system. That is why, she emphasized, that the time is now to become involved in the effort to stop Mumia's execution and free all other political prisoners.

At one point during the appeals process, Judge Sabo—who presided over Mumia's case and who has sent more prisoners to death row than any other judge in the country—said to Weinglass that "justice is just an emotional issue." The inhumanity reflected in that statement is symptomatic of what the rulers are now promoting—and why they must be forcefully combatted.

—Peter Wermuth

ON THE INSIDE

From Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya •
Japan lecture on Hegel page 4
Essay • Marx's law of the falling rate of
profit today page 5
Readers Views pages 6-7

'Silver Rights' history ongoing today

by Laurie Green

*"Sometimes you feel like forgetting it all, flying away and never coming back. Then you don't have nowhere to fly to—so much fighting on."—Mae Bertha Carter, Silver Rights**

Silver Rights is the riveting story of Mae Bertha Carter's struggle, along with her husband Matthew and their children, to integrate the public schools in Drew, Miss., beginning in 1965. Its power is not just in its look back into history, but in the way it captures the ongoing

Woman as Reason

nature of that history. It is of no minor significance, therefore, that author Connie Curry begins by informing us in her Preface that this story "continues long after the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965 and the Meredith March on the roads of Mississippi in 1966—the two events traditionally recognized by civil rights chroniclers as the end of the freedom movement" (xxii).

The book reaches right up to today, and we can be sure that neither Mae Bertha Carter nor Connie Curry would end the story there. They instead demand that our attention again be turned to the ongoing struggles in Sunflower County, in the heart of the Mississippi Delta. When I interviewed Mae Bertha Carter in early February during her book tour with Curry, she was livid about the most recent outrages and anxious to get home to the increasingly militant meetings of Drew parents—mostly Black, but including some white parents as well.

Drew's schools (the schools whites attended, that is) were among the best in Mississippi in 1965; they are now at the bottom. Although nearly all the white parents withdrew their children from the schools in 1970, the first year of full integration, roughly 30% of the poorest white families now send their children to Drew schools. Yet the school board continues to be controlled by appointed officials who send their own children to the all-white "academy."

Back in 1965 the Carter family, then sharecroppers,

Tribute to Black 'HERstory'

Chicago—"Honoring HERstory II, A Poetic Tribute to African-American Women," was a creative celebration of Black History Month sponsored by the National Organization for Women (NOW). It was attended by over 50 Black women, young and old, and less than a dozen Black men and white women combined. All the poets and speakers were Black.

Eleven women and four men—one who was introduced as a Born-Again-Christian!!!—recited 23 poems, mostly their original work, while a few performed poems by Nikki Giovanni, Maya Angelou, Paul Laurence Dunbar and Langston Hughes.

Billie Woodard, president of the Chicago NOW chapter, introduced the program by saying few people on earth have inspired us towards freedom as Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman and others in between including Pauli Murray, who was active in the Civil Rights Movement and became a co-founder of NOW. She added that that inspiration is found not only in the past, but in the present in women community organizers as well as in established organizations of Black women.

The poems performed by women took into account multiple dimensions of human life, oppression and liberation. Notions of reclaiming history were contrasted to white historians who "told our story," unable to see the "strange fruit hanging in the tree," or the "genius of the underground railroad," or the birth of jazz coming from the creativity of "the movement of feet towards freedom," as Lynn Brewer Robinson said in her poem "Our Story."

In a poem called "Hands," Angela Shannon powerfully described how even when Black women are reduced to an instrument of labor, their humanness proceeds, even though they struggle to feel it: "When they told us we could have each other, I didn't know what to do...I'd lost my hands to scrubbing, ironing...just tools for cleaning...But I'll stretch them out...and I've loved you longer than I've had wooden hands."

Tributes were paid to mothers. The following lines of "African Mother" were written and performed by Tamika Coley, a high school senior enrolled in the YWCA Young Parents Program: "There is no brother, sister or other to take the place of our African mother....To stand tall and proud...to guide us through the years when no one else is around."

Jewel Howard got the only standing ovation after reciting her poem "NOW is the Time." It was a tribute to Pauli Murray. Her poem injected and defined the necessity of feminist perspectives in past and present history—NOW has always been the time. She used both the terms "Jim Crow" and "Jane Crow" in describing how Black women have been kept from full participation in life. She concluded: "In fighting against Jane Crow, Pauli Murray founded NOW."

Another poem that moved women to tears was "Herstories," written by Toni Bond, director of the Chicago Abortion Fund. She told the stories of rape, domestic violence, illegal abortion, forced sterilization and incest that take the person, the beauty "I know she used to be," away. But all sense of self was not lost as seen in her story of genital mutilation: "I have a friend...She misses home, but not the tradition and culture."

The evening ended with Billie emphasizing the urgency of voting in the upcoming elections. She said, "Sixty percent didn't vote in 1994, and so we got this contract out on us." It was a great evening. —Sonia Bergonzi

made history when seven of Mae Bertha and Matthew's 13 children became the only students in Drew—and in Sunflower County—who dared to attend the previously all-white schools after the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Drew, like scores of other localities in Mississippi, sent out a "Freedom of Choice" letter, sure that Black parents would be too intimidated to choose the "white" schools.

Mae Bertha, convinced that she would endure anything to win her children a better education, was out of town when the Freedom of Choice letter arrived. She returned to discover that all seven of her school-age chil-



Mae Bertha Carter and Connie Curry

dren had decided to choose the "white" schools. As Ruth, the eldest Carter to attend Drew High School (her older five siblings graduated from segregated schools), tells Curry:

"So we really jumped at the chance to integrate the school because at least we could get away from the cotton fields, and because we thought it would...make the world a better place. We knew it was the right thing to do" (p. 110).

The story of the next five years, until their lawsuit forced the town to genuinely integrate by ordering all parents to send their children to the same schools, is one of tremendous determination. The Carters were evicted from the Pemble plantation and each child, the sole African-American student in the class, endured name-calling, spitballs and isolation. "They were trying to get you out of the school, so you couldn't let them defeat you," recalls Larry, the oldest son to enter Drew High.

Curry's work tells us much about history as ongoing. Instead of conveying this determination as a spontaneous product of the 1960s freedom movement, she devotes two chapters to the story of Mae Bertha's mother, Luvenia Noland Slaughter, who "didn't hesitate" to assert that her daughter's courage came directly from her.

Curry also portrays Mae Bertha's involvement in the NAACP beginning in 1955, as well as her enthusiastic participation in mass meetings in nearby Cleveland during the early 1960s. Just as Rosa Parks was an activist in the NAACP long before she was "too tired" to move to the back of the bus in Montgomery in 1955, so Mae Bertha Carter had ten years of activism with the NAACP while waiting for the right moment to really bring about a change.

Indeed, Curry's own history is important in documenting the early Civil Rights Movement. An American Friends Service Committee field representative in the South in the 1960s, when she assisted families like the Carters, Curry had worked with the U.S. National Student Association and was the only white asked to join the executive committee of SNCC at its first meeting.

Curry's point here is crucial as well. Histories of the Civil Rights Movement rarely show the new chapters opened after the 1964 Civil Rights and 1965 Voting Rights Acts, when local Mississippians, so many of them women, fought to ensure that the gains of the movement would become reality. The Carters went on to battle over federal poverty programs such as Headstart, where both Mae Bertha and Matthew got jobs, and welfare rights. These struggles continue today. This book, therefore, is not one of nostalgia, but written for the ongoing history of the 1990s.

* Silver Rights by Constance Curry (Algonquin, 1995)

IN CELEBRATION OF WOMEN'S REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY, YESTERDAY AND TODAY ...

"When [Clara] Zetkin proposed to the 1910 Second International Women's Conference that an International Women's Day [IWD] be adopted, it was an act of solidarity with organizing struggles of the American garment workers who had erupted in the 'Uprising of the 20,000' the year before. Six days after the first IWD was celebrated in March 1911, the infamous sweatshop Triangle [Shirtwaist] Fire took the lives of 146 workers, most of whom were young women, and Rose Schneiderman organized no less than 120,000 workers in the funeral march—not just to mourn but to declare solidarity with all unorganized women workers."

ROSA LUXEMBURG, WOMEN'S LIBERATION, AND MARX'S PHILOSOPHY OF REVOLUTION
By Raya Dunayevskaya

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Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

A campaign for countrywide support has been launched for 350 predominantly women garment workers in Dhaka, Bangladesh left jobless when the Titas Apparels Factory closed at the end of 1995—three days after the workers went on strike. The company had for months refused to negotiate workers' demands to end 80-hour work weeks, poor air quality and ventilation, crowded work space, and instead hired thugs to intimidate the new union. The National Garment Workers Federation has initiated protests, demonstrations and sit-in strikes calling for reinstatement of the workers, recognition of the union and an end to harassment of union members.

Women's rights and reproductive rights groups are demanding the repeal of the Internet abortion gag rule included in the Telecommunications Act which became law, Feb. 8. The clause prohibits using the Internet to share information on abortion and abortion devices. The Eastern Federal District Court has refused to issue a restraining order to block enforcement of the gag rule.

A coalition of German women activists and politicians is petitioning to nominate the Russian Committee of Soldiers' Mothers for the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize. The committee was founded in 1989 to campaign against war and for human rights within the Russian army, and most recently the mothers marched to Chechnya to demand the return of their sons.

From The Gambia—what women's liberation is

Editor's note: We print below the concluding passage from a full-page article asking "What is Women's Liberation" that appeared in the Gambian paper FOROYAA (Freedom). Although it appeared in an issue dated November 1-8, 1995, it reached us just in time for our International Women's Month issue.

Women's Liberation comes through mental liberation. It comes with enlightenment so that the woman will understand herself and develop a sense of dignity and self-worth. It comes with the understanding of one's society and the world so as to participate in enlightening and working with men and women to eradicate all ideas, political, economic, social and cultural practices which prevent women, in particular, and all human beings in general, from living lives of dignity, liberty and prosperity. The first step towards Women's Liberation is to seek enlightenment and to devote ourselves to transmitting what we know to others who are yet to know.

—Amie Sillah and Fatour Gaye

Laid-off Somerville

workers reject low-wage jobs

Somerville, Tenn.—I last reported that Somerville Mills would close its doors on Jan. 30, and move to Mexico. However, the company is still operating its warehouse and as of Feb. 24, only sewing machine operators—bargaining unit members of Local 282, IUE-Furniture Division—have been laid off.

The company wrote that they would start laying off in the warehouse Feb. 21 and close by Mar. 5, but workers there say no one has been let go since early February. Work from Mexico is still being brought in and stocked. We are still waiting on the Labor Board's responses to complaints we filed regarding the company's decision to close, bad-faith bargaining, and attempts to decertify the union.

The sewing machine operators were called by the unemployment office to a meeting on Feb. 14, at the Oak Room at Somerville Bank. We met people there from TRA (Trade Readjustment Allowances), a job placement program designed under federal law for workers whose jobs relocated outside the U.S. TRA retrains and reschools people so they can get "skilled" jobs. City officials in Fayette County and throughout the South call sewing jobs "unskilled" so these companies can make millions of dollars off of us.

At this meeting the supervisor of the Fayette County unemployment office told workers that the plant managers at Allison and Master Apparel, car accessory and clothing manufacturers in Somerville, wanted her to send workers from Somerville Mills to those plants. She told them she would be calling them. And the next day, the calling began.

The unemployment office told workers if they did not take these jobs at Allison and Master Apparel their unemployment would be exhausted. The only jobs the companies had were on sewing machines. We told her we were not interested in doing any more "unskilled" work because it pays minimum wage. We want to do the TRA training programs.

The lady at unemployment told workers to come in and sign a refusal-to-work paper. We immediately contacted our union representatives, who sent out a letter to Governor Sundquist, the unemployment supervisor, our state representative and others to protest this violation of federal law in denying workers unemployment security and TRA benefits because they would not take these "unskilled" jobs. We have scheduled a meeting to discuss the next steps we will be taking with our local union representatives.

—Laid off Black worker

Ontario general strikes fight Right

Kingston, Ontario—Opposition to the Conservatives has come quickly and mounted steadily in Ontario since June 1995, when they swept out of office the social democratic New Democratic Party. Calling for a Common Sense Revolution, the Ontario Conservatives promised a massive tax cut for the middle class, a 20% cut to welfare payments, the cutting of jobs in the civil service and the privatization of government services.

Once elected, the government's major weapon in the assault on the deficit—in reality an assault on the poor, people of colour, women's groups and the labour movement—became Bill 26, the Savings and Restructuring Act to give the Conservatives the power to close hospitals, dissolve municipalities, inspect private medical records and regulate where doctors can practice, change environmental standards for mining operations and roll back pay equity agreements. Public outrage forced the Conservatives to hold public hearings on the bill.

In the end less than 10% of the roughly 360 proposed changes were debated before the bill was passed on Jan. 29, 1996. Predictably, the Conservatives have already backed away from their promise of a major tax cut, while the 13,000 jobs slated to be cut from the Ontario civil service may be as high as 27,000.

The one-day general strike held in London, Ont., on Dec. 11 showed the potential for united action, as 40,000 of the city's 60,000 workers risked employer retaliation by walking off the job in an illegal work stoppage called by the Ontario Federation of Labour. It remains to be seen if this was, as Sam Gindin, Assistant to the President of the Canadian Auto Workers put it, "the beginning of a new politics," but it is certainly true that organized labour and allied movements of people of colour, women, gays and lesbians, students and the disabled are mobilizing in a manner not seen in Ontario for many years.

Deep scars remain from the New Democratic Party's years in office. The New Democrats took upon themselves the task of deficit reduction. The party's vehicle was the Social Contract, which involved job losses, the abrogation of collective bargaining rights and the forcing of public sector workers to take unpaid days off work. While the big private sector unions, notably the Steelworkers, remained loyal to their traditional ally, many public sector unions roundly condemned the actions of Bob Rae's government and remain embittered about what they consider an unprincipled betrayal.

There are signs, however, that the rift between the public and private sector unions is beginning to heal in the face of the Conservatives' brutal assault. If that unity can grow and encompass allies in the women's, anti-racism, and gay and lesbian movements, and if rank-and-file militants can push the union leadership to more radical action, Ontario's Conservatives may discover that winning the provincial election was a minor skirmish in a much more meaningful battle. —Peter Campbell

We're all temporary labor

Chicago—Over the last several years, Toys-R-Us has been trying to cut back the hours of full-timers to the barest minimum. They have gotten rid of half the full-timers. Now when Christmas came, they told us the "good news": they would guarantee us at least 38 hours a week. This is after not getting the usual overtime in Christmas season that makes or breaks your whole year. After this "good news" though, the boss turns around and says we'll have to be more "flexible" in return.

We heard that the real reason they have to give us 38 hours is because of a lawsuit pending against Toys-R-Us. So what they are doing now is, they'll give workers such a flexible schedule it's almost impossible to work. Also, workers who every year got at least a progressive raise this year are suddenly told they have not "met their expectation on work" so they must be re-evaluated in 60 days. Meanwhile, you have to sell your soul—every week you get an evaluation. It reminds me of being in school. Even if you keep the job, the heavy hand of the boss is on you, always reminding you there's 100 people ready to take your job in a minute.

They couldn't bump us to part time right off and had to have this two-year plan and even that wasn't enough, because they have to justify themselves to their own rules, to the game they set in motion and to what minuscule rights we still have. The most boss-oriented employee in the store, the most reactionary worker, all of a sudden used the "u" word as what we need—a union.

I feel that we are living under that General Law of Capitalist Accumulation that Marx wrote of in *Capital*: "Modern industry's whole form of motion therefore depends on the constant transformation of a part of the working population into unemployed or semi-employed 'hands.'" Where workers before could live and die in one company, today we're all temporary labor, all falling into that army of reserve labor.

It is really strange to hear some left intellectuals totally dismissing workers as any kind of force for movement in this country. If the situation is as bad as it is, where is the voice of theory? This situation should be a breeding ground for revolution. Not only is it not that, the challenge is not coming from the Left but from the Right, which raises the nationalist banner, or the "white working-class" banner, and has attracted some following. We as a working class do need some kind of answer. If it is not revolution, then it will be fascism. That to me is the General Law of Capitalist Accumulation—either total freedom or tyranny. Where is the responsibility of left thinkers?

—David L. Anderson

Toronto—Another city-wide strike closed the big industrial city of Hamilton on Feb. 23 and 24. Called by the Ontario Federation of Labour, this was one of the largest demonstrations in Canadian history. On Friday, 25,000 strikers closed down industrial plants and government offices, and the downtown core of the city was sealed off. The following day 120,000 marchers converged on Hamilton's Convention Centre, where the Tory Premier and the party faithful gathered.

A week before the great Hamilton strike, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union voted to turn down the Tory government's contract offer. On Monday, 25,000 OPSEU picketers were on the streets. Then on Feb. 27, 50,000 Ontario public servants joined an unprecedented strike action that has closed government offices across the province.

A facet of the Canadian events (and those in France last December) that has been obscured is the role of the "universal class" in Hegel's terms, in other words, public sector workers. Theoretically and practically the left treats these workers as though they have already been privatized. But public sector workers form a huge barrier to capital's rush to lower the social wage and crush the poor, the disabled, children and other dependents of the state.

—David MacGregor

Wildcat at Dodge Truck

Detroit—A wildcat strike by over 1,800 workers erupted at Chrysler's Warren truck assembly plant toward the end of the day shift on Saturday, Feb. 17, when the company fired the local union's president and committeeman for "illegally" stopping production.

The two fired union officials, Randall Pearson, UAW Local 140 president, and Herman Ector, committeeman, claimed that the walkout occurred because production was unsafe at the plant which produces Chrysler's popular Dakota and Ram Charger trucks. Picket lines kept the plant closed through Monday with the workers demanding the return of their fired officials before they would go back to work.

International UAW officers, condemning the strike as unauthorized, ordered the strikers back to work, and the company declared that it would not enter into any talks with the union about the firings until the workers went back to their jobs. The strike ended on Tuesday morning and Chrysler management said it would consider the discharges.

Local union President Pearson is also a member of the UAW's Chrysler national negotiating team, and a Chrysler retiree said this action by the company could very well have been an effort to try to get rid of Pearson since UAW contracts end this fall and Chrysler is being targeted for strike action. Chrysler is currently the most profitable of the U.S. auto companies, has billions of dollars in reserve funds and would therefore have the most to lose if it failed to negotiate a favorable contract with the UAW, which would in turn be used as the pattern for negotiations with GM and Ford.

The Warren plant, which daily produces more than 500 each of the highly profitable Dakota and Ram Charger trucks, reportedly lost more than \$7 million in profits from the lost production of 1,800 trucks during the three-day strike. —Retiree

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

by saying she knew we were angry; she was angry, too. She very quickly, however, got around to reminding us of the plant rules, including attendance. She said that we had signed a contract with the company when we were hired. She must have meant the sheets on the front of our copies of the plant rules and the attendance policy that stated "I have read and understood..." which we signed and turned in to Human Resources.

All I could think about was the way Karl Marx in *Capital* discussed the "contract" between the buyer of labor-power, the capitalist, and its seller, the worker. The laborer approaches the capitalist as an isolated person who makes an individual agreement to put her capacity to labor at the capitalist's disposal for a certain amount in wages. It is an exchange between equals: "They contract as free agents...and they exchange equivalent for equivalent."

As soon as a worker enters the process of production, however, all equality disappears. "The co-operation of wage-laborers is entirely brought about by the capital that employs them... Hence the connection existing between their various labors appears to them, ideally, in the shape of a preconceived plan of the capitalist, and practically in the shape of the authority of the same capitalist, in the shape of the powerful will of another, who subjects their activity to his aims."

The other thing that disappears once a worker enters the process of production is her isolation. Cooperation creates "a new power, namely, the collective power of the masses," which benefits the capitalist as long as he has control over it, but which also can be the basis for workers' resistance. Our rebellion was small and short-lived, but I was glad to find three other people who were willing to risk discipline and stay home on that Saturday.

Local 282 back at Hood

Jackson, Miss.—Tonight, Feb. 26, was a great night for workers at Hood Furniture. More than seven years ago we voted to be represented by Furniture Workers Local 282, a division of IUE. We voted for Local 282 because it is an organization that fights for its members and supports them, and because we learned to trust and believe in its president, Willie Rudd, an independent Black man. The company refused to negotiate with Local 282. They abused, mistreated and lied to us.

In 1993, the IUE International in Washington, D.C. sold us into another local (Local 797) behind our backs. But we never gave up. Tonight we voted 49-0 to return to Local 282, and we have a chance to rebuild our union.

On Feb. 22, at 6 a.m., Willie Rudd, Local 282 president, had arrived at the plant to distribute leaflets inviting workers to participate in this vote ending Local 797 representation at the plant, and transferring representation to Local 282. Several of us got to work about 45 minutes before the shift started, and Rudd was in the parking lot. A new guard from Days Security told Rudd to get off company property, that they had orders to keep him out of the plant.

But the guards weren't going to stop us. Several of us who have supported Local 282 from the beginning took the leaflets from Willie Rudd as he was being forced off the property. We passed them out to everyone coming in to work. They couldn't say anything to us. When the shift was going to start, we stopped and went in to work, so we couldn't be accused of doing anything on company time. By keeping Rudd off the property, after they have allowed Local 797 representatives in the plant many times, they made a mistake. Rudd told us later, "the company should have ignored me. Instead they made a hero of me."

We never wanted anything to do with Local 797 and the slave contract they signed with Hood. The reason the International agreed to let us go back to 282 is that we stuck together and refused to accept 797, because it is a company union. We wore 282 T-shirts; we had our own union in ourselves.

Local 797 gave up when they saw what happened last fall when they tried to take dues from the checks of the workers they got to sign their cards. There was such an outcry that they stopped after two checks. They knew they wouldn't ever get dues income.

The law says that Hood has to recognize Local 282 as the union representative for the contract now. We all hate this contract. What we have in the plant now is a rule of terror called the "point system." Everyday they use the system to terrorize workers; if you get too many points, they get rid of you. And there is nothing fair or right about how you get points. The contract is everything for the company, and nothing for us. But the contract runs out on Aug. 4, 1996, and we need to sign up as many workers into the union as possible before that.

We will negotiate a new contract right here in Jackson, not in Washington, D.C., like they did with the 797 contract. We have a right to be treated like human beings, not like monkeys or dogs. We showed that we can hold out for years, and we are not going to stop now.

—Two Hood Furniture workers

Workload real SEIU story

Chicago—I don't know who is worse, SEIU Local 25 Vice Presidents Dwyer and Waldo, just fired by the international union, or President Gene Moats and Secretary-Treasurer Richard Malkowski, who they charged with nepotism and corruption. All I know I know is in 1992 I went to Waldo because I had too much work to do, and he said I should feel lucky there were still two women working for the amount I had. I hadn't been back to a union meeting since then—until Feb. 12. I didn't want to hear about Moats and Malkowski second-hand.

There was basically a riot of Polish people! There were a thousand people there, but the capacity of the meeting room is 50 to 100. The police came and told people to leave quietly or be arrested.

In the meeting there was one Polish woman who was crying. She had been working for 26 years when her boss fired her. The union found her another job across the street from her old one, but she didn't want it. She would have to start all over again without any seniority and she would have been the first to get laid off.

They will fire you if they want. If we get three letters in one year, we're out—no ifs, ands or buts. The union won't help you.

Local 25 isn't really doing its job. They are afraid of BOMA, the Building Owner Managers Association. At the big meeting at the Bismarck Hotel to sell the contract a year and a half ago, there was Moats, Malkowski and Waldo, up there on the stage. Local 25 didn't win because the non-union subcontracting is still going on.

A year and a half later, we just got a cost-of-living raise, 30¢, so now we're getting \$10.85 an hour. Now they got temporary workers in the downtown Loop and they are paying them \$7.50 an hour. They should be union. I know a lady who's been working for four years. She's still getting \$7.50 an hour. Our boss says we can be replaced with \$7.50 an hour workers.

When I started in 1978 there were four women doing the same work as two today. Until the last union contract, the square footage used to be 32,000 square feet maximum that each one of us has to clean every night. Now it's up to 45,000 square feet. So the two of us each have a little over 40,000 square feet! Some have 50,000. We are probably going to be on disability soon!

Moats, who was president of Local 25 in 1974, said things have changed since then because women are making the same wages as the men. But the women are also working harder than most men!

—Women building cleaners

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
MARXIST-HUMANIST
ARCHIVES

Editor's Note

The lecture tour in Japan by Raya Dunayevskaya during the winter of 1965-66 was arranged by a group of revolutionaries in the Japanese New Left. A mass movement that had arisen quickly in the 1960s, the Japanese New Left was proudly Marxist, opposed to both Communism and imperialism, vigorously active both in workers' struggles and in theoretical exploration. Dunayevskaya participated in many of their demonstrations, meetings and discussions. To conclude her tour, she gave a lecture on Hegel "in and for himself" to a group of activists and writers in Tokyo on Jan. 2, 1966. Because a serious grappling with the dialectic-proper remains crucial for any freedom movement today, we publish that lecture here on its 30th anniversary.

Part I, which appears here, discusses Hegel's *Phenomenology*. Part II, which will appear in April, takes us through his *Science of Logic* and *Philosophy of Mind*. The original typescript can be found in the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism—a Half-Century of Its World Development* (#9697).^{*} This lecture will be one of the readings for our upcoming classes on "Dialectics of Liberation Today" (See below).

The first thing I want to make clear is that Hegel has a validity all his own, and that I want to talk about Hegel today. Instead of reiterating what Marx did or did not take from Hegel, I am taking for granted that we are Marxists. I am taking for granted that we are proletarian revolutionaries. I will not waste one minute on that. If I mention Marx at all or even Lenin, it is only to show what each of them took from Hegel, and what we have to take from Hegel. The subject is Hegel and no one else.

The second thing to make clear is that, insofar as I am concerned, this means his major works—*Phenomenology of Mind*, *Science of Logic*, *Philosophy of Mind*. I am not interested in Hegel's reactionary ideas about the state, even in his serious work, *The Philosophy of Right*. Marx said all that needs to be said on that question in his criticism of that work. His analysis that what is a legal essence [in Hegel] is actually a legal superstructure, which reveals the actual state of production and economy, led to Marx's discovery of the materialist foundation of history. After that, everything he criticized or took over from Hegel was as a revolutionary materialist.

I am also disregarding Hegel's politics, which has nothing to do with us and is not what we take from Hegel. I am even disregarding Hegel's lectures on *The Philosophy of History* and *The History of Philosophy* because they were his way of giving examples that his great ideas were not as abstract as they sounded, and I am not interested in how he applied them. I am interested only in the actual logic and movement of those ideas which he set forth not only as a summation of all that went before, but as both the prerequisite for Marxism and something we have not yet exhausted. We first have to work out many of the ideas before we can transcend them.

Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* (1807) was a summons to grasp the spirit of the times. It was a demand that the philosophers give ear to the urgency of the times. It was a challenge to all the philosophers who came before him (and the greatest in modern times was Kant) that 25 years had passed since the French Revolution, and philosophy was still using the old categories. He was saying they had to stop using the conclusions of other philosophers, right or wrong, as a pillow for their own intellectual sloth, their own laziness, their own attempt not to meet the challenge of the times. A new thing had happened in the world in a 25-year period, which compelled a new stage of cognition. And a new stage of cognition means both a summation of what has happened up to your time and a recognition of the pull that the future has on you. We want to see how Hegel

^{*} For her report on the trip to Japan, see "The New Left in Japan: Achievements and Goals" by Raya Dunayevskaya in *News & Letters*, February 1966. (#3727). Also see the "Weekly Political Letter" of March 5, 1962, "Japan's New Left of Intellectuals and Workers; Possibilities of New International Relations." (#3029)

Lecture on Hegel in Japan

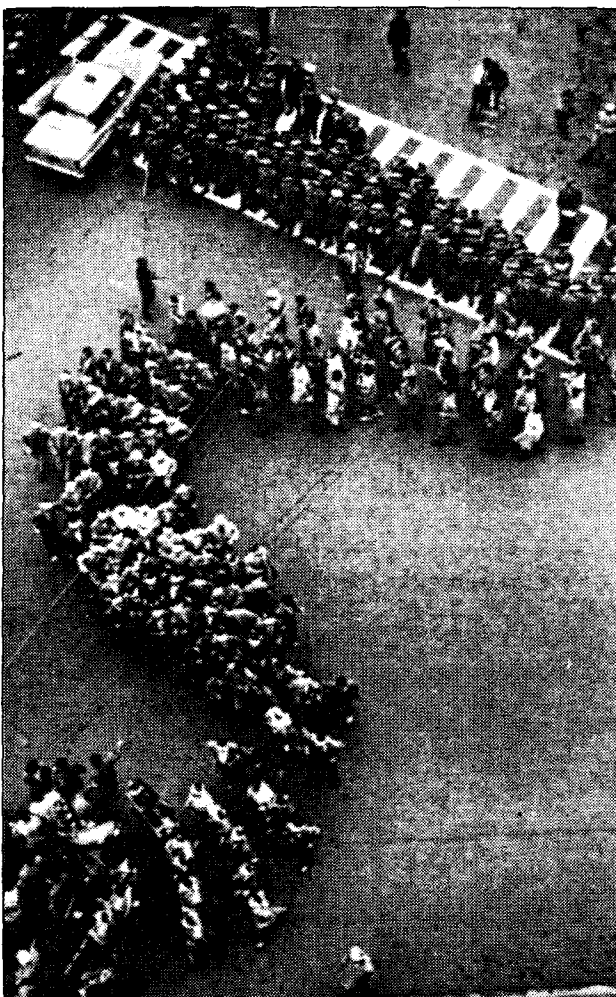
'A summons to grasp spirit of the times'

answered that summons and what it means for our day.

The first total statement he made was in the *Phenomenology of Mind* which was to have been an introduction to the *System*, the *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences*. It is generally recognized as his greatest work.

I want to make sure we realize that Hegel, despite the abstract language, is actually dealing with 2,500 years of the development of thought, mainly but not completely of Western civilization. But since we cannot go into great detail, I want to make an even worse abstraction, in one sense, and follow what Marx does in Volume Two of *Capital*. Marx says that the only way we will see the law of motion of capitalism is to disregard anything that interferes with just two departments of production—means of production and means of consumption (constant capital and variable capital, and so on). Always it is just two, like two classes.

I want to take the six stages of Hegel's development of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, Spirit, Religion and Absolute Knowledge, and divide them into two



"Snake dance" protests in 1960 prevent President Eisenhower's visit to Japan to complete the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and they announce the birth of the Japanese New Left.

major stages. One will combine Consciousness, Self-Consciousness and Reason, which I consider the development from 500 B.C. (slave society and Aristotle as the ancient world's greatest philosopher) to Reason (which is capitalism, the French Revolution, Lutheranism, and Kant-Hegel). The second department is all the rest, that is, Spirit, the various forms of Alienated Spirit, and why there is still alienation even though you have reached Religion, and Absolute Knowledge. So there are two departments: 1.) Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason and 2.) Spirit, Religion, and Absolute Knowledge.

In the first department what we have all previously emphasized from Marx forward is the section of Lordship and Bondage because we recognize that Hegel is showing that the lord could demand anything and the slave had to follow through, and yet Hegel is insisting that the slave is the one who gets "a mind of his own." That was one of the bases for Marx's great development of proletarian consciousness. Secondly, it was our proof that Hegel really did have in mind reality which included class structure and history, which included labor's condition. However, today that is not the point I want to em-

phasize because I am tracing the dialectic of thought itself.

The importance of that section, great as it is, is that the serf has got a mind of his own, but there are a lot of questions about whether he will get to Reason, whether he will get to Spirit. The main questions are the following: He is showing that if you already become conscious, not only of the world and yourself as opposites, but of yourself as yourself getting Self-Consciousness and going further to try to break down this division between the opposite and you, and if at that point you are so thrilled with the idea you have reached, it could become, in his words, "just a piece of cleverness, and not yet the mastery over reality." You could become just an Alienated Soul.

There are other questions. I want to take up one we confront in Self-Consciousness—Stoicism. Hegel shows he is opposed not only to the Alienated Soul who has got this piece of cleverness and is what we could call a "Beatnik" today. He is even opposed to what other philosophers consider a great stage, Stoicism. Everybody thinks you are great if you can withstand all sorts of unpleasant things before you. Hegel says not to forget that Stoicism arose when there was universal slavery. You as an individual recognized this was a horrible society and you couldn't overcome it; you weren't what we would call a mass movement that could overcome it. Being a Stoic was actually a rationalization as when the Greeks developed such stupidities as "a philosopher is free even though he is in chains."

Hegel was showing that everything that appears great is only a further stage of alienation, even when he comes to Reason (and we will get to that later). The important thing, therefore, about not stopping at Lordship and Bondage is that that is only a beginning of getting a mind of your own. Hegel is showing that if you are going to master reality, you have to go a lot further than that. Attempts to master it by a thought such as Stoicism—which can be used as an argument both for somebody trying to be free and for the opposite, rationalizing your existence—show it is absolutely insufficient if you are to become the master of reality.

Even when the move to overcome it is sparked by a real revolution, whether he sees that as Christianity or as the actual French revolution, it is still not the answer. As against using the conclusions of other philosophers as a pillow for intellectual sloth, Hegel shows a new movement of history.

There was an actual revolution. It broke down everything, smashed it to smithereens, and started something new. The people who did this great thing, Robespierre and the other leaders [of the French Revolution], recognized Reason as their deity. Yet what happened? Why did the Terror follow? Why did Napoleon follow? Why didn't we get to the millennium? Hegel sees Reason as a very new high stage, but instead of ending all the alienations, it just brings them to a higher stage. Reason—the movement from 500 B.C. to the French Revolution—ends the first department of the two into which I have divided the six stages of *Phenomenology*. The next stage is Spirit.

Now we come to the second department, the central core. The Alienated Soul has moved to a higher development and is now an Alienated Spirit. The higher development is that man has achieved this revolution but begins to identify himself with it either as faction or as person: Hegel makes a tremendous attack on the State here. He attacked it thoroughly—totally—even any future state that would come between the person and his development.

There is no one on the historic stage today, whether Mao, or Castro, or anyone else, that you cannot find described in the section on the Alienated Spirit. It is about what happens when there is a new revolution and yet a transformation arises in the relationship of reality and thought in such a way that you begin to identify yourself with the state, or with one single faction, and there is as great a Reign of Terror in thought as in actual revolution. The Reign of Terror in thought is against the Other, the new opponents. The new opponents include even religions, which we come to next.

Hegel's criticism of what he called "the discipline of culture" is the foundation for Marx's criticism of the superstructure. Hegel was no proletarian revolutionary,

(Continued on page 10)

At a moment when today's political retrogression looms so large that the very idea of revolution seems unreal, it becomes urgent to turn with new eyes to dialectics. That is because dialectical philosophy—as formulated by Hegel, re-created by Marx, and restated for our day in the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism—not only reveals the limits of today's economic and political phenomena, but also provides the basis for discerning new visions of the future which are inherent in the present. To overcome the crisis in envisioning an alternative to the established social order, we need to critically reassess what dialectics means for today. This class series aims to meet this challenge by exploring several themes spoken to in the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.

Announcing a series of classes starting in March...

DIALECTICS OF LIBERATION TODAY: HEGEL, MARX AND MARXIST-HUMANISM IN LIGHT OF THE CURRENT CRISIS

CLASS 1 • Today's Changed World and The Need for a Revolutionary New Beginning

CLASS 2 • Forces of Revolt as Reason, Philosophy as Force of Revolt

CLASS 3 • Why Hegel? Why Now?

CLASS 4 • Marx's Philosophy of 'Revolution in Permanence': Its Past, Present and Future

CLASS 5 • Spontaneity, Philosophy, and Organization: The Untrodden Path in Post-Marx Marxism

Admission is free. For a syllabus of suggested readings and information, contact the News and Letters Committee nearest you—see page 11.

Essay Article

by Andrew Kliman

Once insight into the connectedness [of bourgeois relations] has been gained, all theoretical belief in the permanent necessity of existing conditions collapses
—Karl Marx

I. Economic crisis and ideology

What motivates this essay are the crises of today. First, the global economic crisis, now in its third decade. Capital accumulation as a percentage of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) has dropped by 25% since 1973 in the developed (OECD) nations, and by one-third in the U.S. since 1978. This crisis has devastated the Third World, brought double-digit unemployment to Europe, and ever-declining living standards, job security, and the wrecking of the social welfare system to working people in the U.S.

Second, the accompanying crisis in thought. So unmanageable is the economic crisis that Keynesianism is nearly defunct. It has become clear that its "pump-priming" policies offer no solution, nor can the Keynesians account for the crisis except through partial and ad hoc explanations. Likewise defunct is their liberal reformism which was predicated on a "rising tide that lifts all boats." So unmanageable is the crisis that the new reigning right-wing ideology itself declares that "government" cannot solve our economic problems—though it would have us believe the economy is in fine shape just as it is, as the Chicago School's Robert Lucas opined upon winning the Nobel Prize in October.

Attention and blame are thus deflected from the capitalist mode of production onto "the Other." The Right "explains" to white and employed working people that their economic troubles are due to Blacks, immigrants, the "underclass." Although you are working hard, you're struggling to get by because "they" are not, and they and the babies they keep having are eating more and more of your tax dollars.

Whether "they" are demonized as morally and culturally deviant, or as too stupid to work and use contraceptives; their very existence is under attack as a needless and wasteful expense. This ideology potentially legitimizes not only such measures as the new disenfranchisement of women and kids to welfare benefits, but the turning of ghettos into reservations (a prospect floated by both Ross Perot and the authors of *The Bell Curve*) and even "ethnic cleansing." Or as Mary put it, "As far as this mode of production is concerned, labour-power is superfluous the moment it is no longer necessary to occupy it for 12 to 15 hours per day."²

Yet no matter how false and intellectually feeble is the Right's "explanation" of people's economic troubles, it does have the advantage of being comprehensive. It will undoubtedly continue to make sense to many people, probably increasingly many, as long as a coherent and comprehensive alternative understanding of the crisis goes unprojected. As noted above, liberalism offers no alternative in this regard; and most of the Left limits itself to decrying and disputing the Right's ideological assault.

Partly this is due to an insufficient recognition on the Left of the power of ideas. Yet it is also due to the Left's own inability to account for the crisis. Left-Keynesian underconsumptionist theory is sharing the fate of mainstream Keynesianism. For a time, many on the Left maintained that rising wages were squeezing profitability. This clearly cannot account for continued crisis at a time of falling real wages.

The only other theory in contention is Marx's law of the tendential fall in the rate of profit. Yet, despite its evident relevance in connecting automation and robotics to mass unemployment and economic crisis, radical economists increasingly reject it because it seems to have been disproved logically. A 1960 theorem of the Leftist economist Nobuo Okishio allegedly shows that Marx's law cannot hold. No matter how empirically relevant the law may seem, this "proof" of its logical impossibility apparently ends all discussion.

To be sure, rejection of Marx's law has always been widespread, even on the Left. Okishio's theorem has made it all but universal.³

II. The Okishio Theorem

Okishio purportedly shows that no matter how mechanized or automated production becomes, profit-maximizing capitalists will never adopt techniques that end up reducing the general profit rate—unless real wages rise. Marx was "simply wrong" to locate declining profitability in mechanization.

This theorem, of course, does not deny that the profit rate can fall. It disputes Marx's explanation of the fall, implying instead that rising real wages are the cause. Likewise, although many theorists have criticized Okishio's theorem, they have not vindicated Marx's law, because they root falling profitability in something other than mechanization itself.

The most influential critique of this sort is that of An-

Marx's law of the falling rate of profit today

war Shaikh and Tekeshi Nakatani. Whereas the Okishio theorem assumes that firms adopt the productive techniques that are most profitable at current prices, Shaikh and Nakatani suggest that cutthroat competition forces them to adopt those techniques that will be most profitable when prices are slashed to undercut competitors. When such "suboptimal" techniques are adopted, the profit rate can fall.

There is undoubtedly merit to this idea. Yet it posits the competitive process, not mechanization, as the cause of declining profitability, in contrast to Marx, who argued that "it is the fall in the profit rate that provokes the competitive struggle between capitals, and not the reverse" (365). Since it reverses the chain of causation,



Young unemployed workers in Marseille, France carry banner that reads "unemployed" in mass demonstration against government economic policy that has led to double-digit unemployment.

the Shaikh-Nakatani critique does not vindicate Marx's law.

The Okishio theorem has thus had a decisive impact in turning radical economists' attention away from capitalist mode of production and towards distribution and competition. Because of such serious implications, and because of the ostensible rigor of Okishio's "proof," the theorem demands a serious examination.

III. Physical productivity vs. value productivity

Okishio "refutes" Marx only by abandoning his concepts of value and thus profitability. For Marx, the profit rate expresses the degree to which dead labor is augmented by surplus living labor. For Okishio, the equilibrium profit rate reflects the degree of physical productivity (output per unit of labor). Given constant real wages, new techniques adopted by profit-maximizing firms to raise their own profitability are so productive that they

This conflation of value production and use-value production is ubiquitous. Today's ideologists propose reversing capitalism's unending economic slump through high tech and productivity increases. Prior to Okishio, moreover, several other noted thinkers also critiqued Marx's law by arguing that greater productivity translates into greater profitability. And it is precisely because almost all critiques of Okishio's theorem have implicitly accepted its conception of profitability that they have failed to vindicate Marx's law.⁴

Let us examine this conception more closely. Imagine an economy that produces only grain, by using grain as seed, and workers, who are paid in grain. In this simple case, Okishio's profit rate is a physical measure: the ratio of surplus grain (grain output minus grain input) to grain invested. Yet even in a multi-product economy, his profitability measure is essentially a physical one.

What this measure implicitly assumes is that the value of grain is constant, irrespective of any changes over time in the labor-time needed to produce it. Marx argued to the contrary that "the total labour of ... 2 million workers always produces the same magnitude of value" (323), no matter how much grain they produce. Thus, as productivity rises, each bushel of grain contains less labor, hence less value.

Rising productivity will indeed raise the ratio of surplus-grain to grain advanced. Yet the grain output appears only at harvest time, when values are lower, while the capital advanced (seed and wages) was invested at sowing time, when values were higher. The ratio of surplus-value to the sum of value advanced can therefore fall, even with constant real wages.

Even larger is the gap between the value of output and old fixed capital. Last summer, for instance, a 1990 Cray computer, originally worth \$12 million, was offered for resale at \$30,000—one-quarter of 1% of its original price!

Hence, whereas David Ricardo sought to explain declining profitability as being caused by exhaustion of the soil and thus falling agricultural productivity, Marx argued exactly the opposite: "The profit rate does not fall because labour becomes less productive, but rather because it becomes more productive" (347).

Today, only a handful of environmentalists would sub-

scribe to Ricardo's view. Yet Marx's point also answers those who fetishize high tech as a solution to capitalism's economic crisis, and indeed any who lay the blame true barrier to capitalist production is capital itself" (358). As rising productivity leads to the expulsion of "superfluous" workers from production, capital lessens its control over and extraction of the living labor that is the only source, not of material products, but its value and surplus-value.

IV. Development of the law's internal contradictions

In itself, the above is insufficient to defend Marx's theory. Two other important objections have been lodged.

First, although the connection of falling profitability to economic crisis may seem obvious—capitalists curtail their investment—this and similar "obvious" notions have been strongly challenged.⁵ And, as we shall see, Marx's explanation is grounded in capital itself, not capitalists' reactions to the falling profit rate. Second, many theorists attempt to blunt the implications of Marx's law by emphasizing that it refers only to a "tendency" of the profit rate to fall. The same productivity increases that tend to lower the profit rate likewise cheapen the means of production and thereby tend to raise the profit rate.

This is true. Yet for Marx the issue was not which of these tendencies dominates. Rather than peacefully coexisting, they are brought together in their internal contradiction in *Capital* Volume III, Chapter 15, "Development of the Law's Internal Contradictions": "[T]hese two aspects involved in the accumulation process cannot just be considered as existing quietly side by side...at certain points the conflict of contending agencies breaks through in crises. Crises are never more than momentary, violent

solutions for the existing contradictions" (357). Highlighting the process of devaluation discussed above, Raya Dunayevskaya also recognized it as the key link between the tendency of the rate of profit to fall and capitalist crisis: "[t]he constant technological revolutions make the time necessary to reproduce a product tomorrow less than the time it took to produce it today. Hence there comes a time when all commodities...have been 'overpaid.' The crisis...follows."⁶

By reducing values over time, in other words, mechanization itself causes the "overaccumulation" of capital: Today's capital, acquired at higher values, is too large relative to tomorrow's lower-valued output. This immanent devaluation of commodities eventually manifests itself in a lack of new value to acquire inputs and workers, and thus sell—at the old, higher values.

Yet declining values also bring about a contradiction between the old and new values of capital. When mechanization's immanent devaluation of capital is made manifest in reality, the contradiction is "resolved": the means of production become cheapened, which does tend to raise the potential profit rate.

This is in fact why Okishio's profit rate rises, the grain invested at sowing time is, in effect, retroactively revalued to conform to its post-harvest value. He thus treats devaluation as an unalloyed blessing to the capitalists, as if a portion of the existing capital simply and painlessly vanishes. Marx, however, recognizes the forcible and temporal nature of devaluation: already existing capital is eradicated through physical destruction, bankruptcies, capital losses due to falling asset prices, and so on (358, 362ff). All this implies a lower, not higher, rate of return on the original outlay of capital.

For Marx, then, the primary expression of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall is not a long-term unilinear fall in the observed profit rate over time, but recurrent crises, which, through the cheapening of capital, likewise tend to restore the profit rate.

V. Looking backward and forward

It should be noted, however, that whereas in Marx's time "normal" economic crises sufficed to destroy enough capital so that value production could be renewed, by the 1930s and '40s, renewal required not only a decade of depression but the destruction of World War II as well, and then only through expanded state intervention.⁷ Today, it is not clear what, if anything, will bring capitalism out of its two-decade-long slump.

Yet it should be now be clear that crisis and increasing misery will not "automatically" bring about either the collapse of capitalism or a revolutionary upsurge to end it and create a new, human society. What becomes crucial is a recognition that our existing conditions are not a "permanent necessity," but result from the value-form of production—which makes us "useful" only insofar as we serve the "restricted end, the valorization of the existing capital" (359)—and that this restriction of human development is capitalism's immanent barrier.

The absolute opposite to the production of capital for the sake of more capital which Marx projected in *Capital*, Volume III, "the development of human powers as an end in itself" (959), is neither mere rhetoric nor utopian morality, but the concrete, practical alternative to a future of continuing crisis.

1. Letter to Ludwig Kugelmann, July 11, 1868.

2. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Vintage, 1981, p. 372. Subsequent references will be indicated in the text, by page number only.

3. To take just two of many possible examples, John Roemer, a founder of "analytical Marxism," writes that "the key economic models and theories that Marxism champions, such as ... the falling rate of profit, are simply wrong" (Free to Lose, Harvard Univ. Press, 1988, p. 2). M.C. Howard and J.E. King write that "To reassert in the face of this [disproof] the relevance of the falling rate of profit, as analyzed by Marx, has done much damage to the intellectual credentials of Marxian political economy" (*A History of Marxian Economics*, Vol. II, Princeton Univ. Press, 1992, p. xiii).

4. For the very few exceptions, see John Ernst, "Simultaneous Valuation Extirpated," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 14:2, Summer 1982; Andrew Kliman, "A Value-theoretic Critique of the Okishio Theorem"; and Alan Freeman, "Price, Value and Profit." The latter essays appear in Marx and Non-equilibrium Economics, Alan Freeman and Guglielmo Carchedi (eds.), Edward Elgar Pub., 1995.

5. See especially Gerard Dumenil and Dominique Levy, "Why Does Profitability Matter," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 25:1, March 1993.

6. Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, Univ. of Illinois Press, 1991, p. 43.

7. See Raya Dunayevskaya, *Philosophy and Revolution*, 3d ed., Columbia Univ. Press, 1981, pp. 226-29.

BOSNIA AND MONTGOMERY: PHILOSOPHIC COMPREHENSION AND GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

I saw a connection between the Archives column on the "Montgomery Bus Boycott and the American Roots of Marxism" and Sheila Fuller's Essay on "The philosophic meaning of Bosnia's struggle," which were printed on facing pages in the January-February issue. The Bus Boycott and Bosnia both represented struggles against segregation that cast one group as subhuman. Ethnic/racial apartheid exists on a global scale. Yet the greatest connection between the two events is the similarity of the Left's response. Finding the revolutionary significance in both cases was either reduced to liberalism or denied altogether. The missing philosophic comprehension of what each represents has prevented the kind of solidarity that moves to reach a totally new world. Philosophy, to me, is the means by which revolutionary notions contained within the struggles are realized and can be developed in other struggles.

Sonia Bergonzi
Chicago

I am translating the Essay on Bosnia into Spanish to send to my friends back home because that Essay gave me some insight into why there is "ethnic cleansing" within the same race, why the Other has to be destroyed, why there is so much fear in my country of Indians integrating the cities. The Essay will be of value back home also because we still have some feudalism there in which the master-slave dialectic is relevant and because there is interest among the intellectuals in Hegel.

Ecuadoran
New York

I would like to know more about what you mean by the "philosophic void" within the Left. What is the relationship of this philosophic void to the transformation of some Yugoslav socialist-humanists into fascists?

Philosophy professor
New York

The Essay article and Editorial on Bosnia in the January-February issue of N&L dramatically complemented each other and were very important contributions to the understanding of the essential issues of that tragedy. The Essay in particular provided very profound insights into the true revolutionary nature of the Bosnians' determination to maintain their multiethnic culture. Most powerfully demonstrated was the ability of a comprehensive Marxist-Humanist analysis to both reveal limitations of other views and show the universality of the relationship of Bosnia to other struggles of liberation—including here in the U.S.

Retiree
Detroit

The excerpt from *Marxism and Freedom* on the Montgomery Bus Boycott took up the whole Southern way of life, its identity through culture and the rudderlessness of the intellectuals. Raya Dunayevskaya really took on Faulkner, a literary icon in America. That is most unusual for a leftist intellectual. Reading the piece in N&L you can see that only through Marxist-Humanism was it possible to appreciate the Montgomery Bus Boycott without separating it from its global ramifications.

Hospital worker
Bay Area

For years many on the Left based their solidarity with the Palestinian people solely on the P.L.O.'s opposition to Israel, the external enemy, and not by working out an alternative that challenged "the internal hierarchies of class and sexuality which confront national liberation struggles." Once the P.L.O. was no longer "anti-Israel" many of those Leftists were totally disoriented because the issues could no longer be solely framed in the context of opposing the external enemy. In contrast Marxist-Humanists have always based their solidarity with any national liberation struggle on developing the ideas and goal of freedom that a movement is for.

This I think can also help explain why many of those leftists who claimed to be so supportive of the Palestinian cause in the past, turned out to be shamefully

quiet on the Bosnian struggle for the preservation of a multicultural existence. The idea of the positive liberatory content of the Bosnian struggle against "ethnic cleansing" and for "multiculturalism" was dismissed and not understood.

Iranian revolutionary
Illinois

I was appalled by how the government of Croatia was treating people during my recent visit there. There is not much hope for that government under Tudjman. Fascists have shut down the only school where you could teach two foreign languages. They claim the students are "not learning to love their country." They are attacking the humanities and social sciences.

There is a plan to repatriate 100,000 Bosnian refugees "with assistance" but there are 200,000 Bosnian refugees in Croatia. Bosnian refugee families are being split because some have to stay with their children in Croatia. The Bosnian territories are so devastated that many cannot go back. The whole infrastructure of Bosnia will have to be rebuilt. I think the Dayton agreement is a huge moral compromise but I don't know what else we can do. For all those who died it is a defeat.

Croatian-American solidarity activist
Chicago

I read the last *News & Letters* and the story on the Montgomery Bus Boycott. It brought back a lot of memories.

Back then, the papers and the government were trying to play the patriot thing if you went on these marches. The media showed people getting beat, implying this is not something you want to join. But at that age you are growing mentally, a whole psychological change from being dependent on your parents to being dependent on yourself.

The struggles now are more isolated than they were back then. The struggles are happening coast to coast, but you don't know about them. That's why I had feelings of great appreciation for people who walked the extra mile, wrote letters, stood with us.

Staley worker
Decatur, Ill.

There was something unique happening in Bosnia, something that could not be allowed to take root or flower. That is why the "divide and rule" tactic was used. The rulers didn't want to see multiculturalism succeed. There is real importance in Bosnia for the world.

Dan
Los Angeles

Bosnia relates to us and our work in the U.S. Sheila Fuller's point is that you can posit identity or you can posit difference, both equally abstractly. But she shows the highest point you can get to there is contradiction. She is saying Bosnia is the test for us.

Bosnia raises issues for us here at home. What kind of thinking are we doing in the U.S. as a way out of the contradictions? The situation in Bosnia is being theorized mostly by postmodernists, discussing Hegelian identity and play of differences. What Sheila Fuller does with Hegel's Doctrine of Essence is not a fixed concept. It is an important step in critique of theory and what is happening with Western civilization.

Artist
Los Angeles

INCOME TAX PROTEST

At income tax time I feel compelled to show my outrage that 51% of the federal budget is allotted to past, present and future military spending. We're feeding a murderous arsenal instead of needy bellies. You can withhold, without penalty, the Federal Excise Tax on your phone bill. This is a minuscule act of protest, but I consider it a proclamation against our unhuman, inhuman system. Enclosed is a check for N&L for the approximate amount of my 1995 deduction of Federal Excise Tax.

Sheila Garden
New York

Readers' Views



FRANCE & ONTARIO ON STRIKE

A few comments on Kevin Anderson's article on the French Strikes (January-February N&L). The main theme of the strike was Prime Minister Alain Juppe's plan for reform of the social security system (welfare, unemployment aid, etc.). This plan has been maintained. The employers told Juppe: "Give in on the issue of retirement, but not on social security." On this point, the strike was unsuccessful. Juppe's austerity plan continues to go through, bit by bit. Also, we should remember that everyone knew that the strikes could not go on through Christmas. The family matters! Finally, the CFDT union federation (which opposed the strike) is not pro-Socialist. It is divided between unions close to the Right, with others close to the far Left. *Esprit* is not a leftist journal.

Pierre and Ariane Lantz
Paris

I learned a great deal from your coverage of the recent French events. The mainstream press has obscured the outcome of the strike suggesting that no gains were made by the workers. Your report makes clear how false that is.

Similarly, the right wing media here have vastly underplayed the one-day general strike in London, Ontario on Dec. 11, 1995 called to protest the anti-labor and anti-welfare state policies of Ontario Tory Premier Mike Harris. Big plants were shut down, schools closed and at least 20,000 people marched in sub-zero temperatures. Professors and teachers rubbed shoulders with bus drivers, hospital orderlies and industrial workers. The strike had a huge impact on people in southwestern Ontario, but elsewhere there is incomprehension.

David MacGregor
Toronto, Ontario

The militant resistance to an austerity budget in France was in full view here. Katha Pollit wrote in *The Nation* that the French strike "shows what can happen when people refuse to accept the parameters of the debate as defined for them by the political class." Maybe that's why workers and activists in Atlanta blockaded the French consulate in Atlanta in December in solidarity with French workers.

Journalist
Chicago

The article on the French strikes shows there's a second France from the one that is making a bid for world power. Their nuclear development is extensive. And now you can get six months in jail for mixing languages on the air. It is important to establish revolutionary links with France today.

Observer
Berkeley

FARRAKHAN'S AGENDA

It was instructive that one of Farrakhan's first acts upon returning from his recent trip to Iraq and Iran was to meet in Chicago with leaders of 300 organizations who helped build the Million Man March. Many of them are upset that Farrakhan walked off with the money raised at the march. And therein lies a tale.

Just as many in the Iranian Left in 1979-80 thought that they could use Khomeini to obtain a mass base, so much of the Left today thinks it can use Farrakhan to obtain a following in the Black community. Yet it is not they who are using Farrakhan, it is Farrakhan who is using them. This is only partly seen in what happened to the money raised at the march. It is most of all seen in how Farrakhan has used the march to present himself as the leading "militant" challenge to white America—though his "militancy" is based on counter-revolutionary, neo-fascist premises.

Peter Wermuth
Chicago

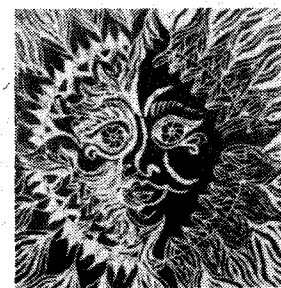
When Farrakhan visited Iran, he called the counter-revolutionary Iranian Islamic Republic—which has murdered hundreds of thousands of youth, women, national minorities and workers—a "model religious democracy." He embraced the Iranian president Hashemi Rafsanjani, a murderous dictator who has demolished any vestige of freedom and democracy which the mass-based 1979 revolution tried to establish. Clearly Farrakhan is made of the same matter that Rafsanjani is made of. Let us not be deceived. It is a counter-revolutionary agenda that directs his misogynist, anti-Semitic, separatist, homophobic, capitalist organizing drive in the U.S.A.

Iranian feminist
Chicago

HUNGARIAN POVERTY LINE

I just heard on the radio that the IMF has a problem in establishing the poverty line here in Hungary (whether it should be the equivalent of \$100 or \$120 per month), whereby they would classify up to 40% of the population as such and not the presently official 10%. In actuality, we could speak of 60% to 70%, if not more, living in actual poverty. It is hard to understand what criteria they are using to measure poverty when most people here live in misery. Schools are closing because they don't have money to pay for heating. Apartment houses are without heat because they can't pay their gas bills. The average minimum wage hovers around 80 U.S. cents per hour. It is paid most of the time under the table as otherwise it would be subject to a 30% income tax. Yet prices are at least equal and sometimes higher than in the U.S. A monthly old age pension is between U.S. \$80 and \$200. A pair of running shoes can get as high as \$140; a pair of regular shoes, \$60-\$300.

Gyorgy
Budapest



'WAITING TO EXHALE'

I couldn't set up a "Waiting to Exhale" movie party with the other Black women I work with because of our conflicting schedules, so I ended up going alone. But not once did I feel alone. The audience was wonderful. I've heard a lot of critique of the movie and share some of it but the criticism that it "lacked realism" is not what concerned me or the other Black women who felt compelled to see the movie. I went to see some image of myself on a big, wide screen. We are so stereotyped it is as if we don't exist at all. There was a hunger to see what we go through even if it is portrayed in these alienated middle-class women.

I commented to one of my friends that we now need a "Waiting to Exhale" that has to do with Black working women to let people know how we survive. She said, "It would have to show how we really are not surviving." I guess that is really more to the point.

Diane Lee
Chicago

"Waiting to Exhale" did strike a chord with me, a white woman, in showing the contradiction between where one's life actually is, and the hopes and dreams that are "pushed" by society, i.e. getting and/or keeping a man. This contradiction is shown in how disastrous all the relationships with men were. Counterposed to it are moments the women shared with each other, which were warm and supportive. But there is no resolution. Despite the applause and practically a standing ovation at one part, I can't believe that the women in the audience really identified with the characters in the movie. I can only assume that they enjoyed seeing miserable men put in their place by strong women.

Women's liberationist
Oakland, Cal.

POLITICS OF OPPRESSION: U.S. STYLE

The New Hampshire primary results certainly bore out the warning in your January-February Lead on the "ailing state of the union" when it said that Buchanan could well be the type Daniel Guerin had in mind when he wrote in *Fascism and Big Business* that "When fascism proclaims itself anti-bourgeois it has no intention of attacking the existing social order" but just wants to inject fresh blood into it. What is most frightening of all is that this racist, sexist, anti-Semite was the only one who was projecting any ideas about what he was all about. I heard one commentator who got it right when he said: "As repugnant as the idea may be, an idea will beat a non-idea every time."

Alarmed
Pennsylvania

"homosexual lifestyles." There was an attempt to force the statewide public TV network to self-censor itself of anything that portrayed the so-called "gay lifestyle" in an acceptable manner. I wrote a letter pointing out that even a tribute to Lenny Bernstein could have been illegal under such a restriction.

Correspondent
Oklahoma

Colin Powell was brought out to speak against Pat Buchanan, saying Buchanan was a bigot and not good for the Republican Party. But Powell, just like Buchanan, is opposed to gays in the military. I guess there's a limit to tolerance.

Math professor
Milwaukee, Wis.

The last time I watched C-Span, I saw people in Congress piecemealing the funds. To me the Republicans are setting the stage to go in the back door with what they want. Education, for example, isn't getting funded at all. But Clinton is scared to confront them again because this is an election year and he doesn't want it to look like he is shutting down the government. It's kind of like the concessions in the 1980s. The unions went along thinking they were going to make it up later. But they never did get back what they gave up.

Woman bus driver
Decatur, Ill.

A week after celebrating Dr. M.L. King's birthday in Oklahoma City, the City Council decided that the official Human Rights Commission should be abolished. The pretext for the decision, in a 5 to 3 vote, was that the gay/lesbian rights ordinance recommended by the commission was inconsistent with "moral values" held by some Bible Belt residents. Never mind that discrimination against racial minorities and Hispanics in housing and unemployment is obvious to anyone even visiting.

One Democratic state representative has also introduced a resolution to put the legislature "on record" as opposed to

With the government we see in there now, they're talking about cutting Medicare. Are old people supposed to just die? The government can do better, especially for old people and people like us who take care of them. A lot of us are home care workers because we like the job. We don't want to see people deprived of home care and going into nursing homes where they won't be taken care of at all. I want to treat them the way I would want to be treated, the way I would want my own mother and father treated. I don't want them to be hungry all day. Some of them are dirty like a baby and need to be cleaned up. At the wages we're on, transportation is a problem. Take care of in suburbs way out like Willow Springs. We don't even have health insurance for ourselves. \$4.25 is a death wage. \$7.60 is a living wage. That's why we are out here fighting.

Home care workers
Chicago

What Pat Buchanan offers is a quick fix. The working class is impatient and does need an answer, but the quick fix is a dead end. Without a total vision, workers will still jump for something.

David L. Anderson
Chicago



LABOR'S STRUGGLES TODAY

The January-February issue of N&L shows that the conditions of prison and the conditions of work are not that far apart. A worker writes that "My neighbor's son says that he is not allowed to talk to any fellow employees while he's eating lunch." This sounds like prison conditions, complete domination by the company. Lunch time should be the worker's free time. If you are not being paid for lunch, by law you can even leave the plant. My question is, Why are conditions of labor in union plants as bad as in non-union shops?

Black worker
Los Angeles

Where have you been? We missed you at Sinai Kosher. We have the foreman in the packaging department under control, thanks to *News & Letters*. He spends most of the time in the office. We need to see more things about what's going on here in that paper. We don't know from day to day when we have to come to work. One day it will be 9 a.m. and then they'll turn around and make us come in at 4 a.m. Local 100 says we have to wait until the next contract to get regular hours because "you can't penalize the company" just because it's not in the contract now!

Sinai Kosher workers
Chicago

I stumbled across your journal in a left-wing bookshop in London and found it a refreshing change to read about class struggle and radicalism in the U.S. One gets the impression from the British media that class struggle is not something that afflicts the U.S.

Socialist
England

Reports of what the Staley workers are going through following the defeat of their struggle give a true picture of what it means to lose a war—a class war. The workers are now prisoners of war in that plant, and the hell of production that they knew only too well before, and tried to remedy is clearly much worse now. You can bet it will become increasingly unbearable both in and out of the plant.

Ex-miner
Detroit

YOUNG IDEAS

There are so many ideas presented in N&L, not just theory and not just labor and liberation struggles, but all of it presented in unity. It has made me see the need for a solid philosophical basis as well as action. My brother, who is alienated more every day from this unjust system, has not yet discovered the power of collective action and becomes increasingly despairing of change. I'm getting him a sub because I think N&L will provide a much wider discussion than what he has encountered in his college ethics course which is focused on stupid Ayn Rand objectivism.

Student
Urbana

My only complaint about N&L is that it does not come out often enough and is too short. I like the articles that relate what Marx was writing about with what is happening today. The theoretical articles by Raya Dunayevskaya are just as important as the current events. I don't consider myself a Marxist-Humanist, though I draw my ideas extensively from Marx, Lenin and many other New Left figures like Marcuse, Althusser, etc.

I find the global New Left movement of 1968 inspiring ideologically and action-wise. It fused radical politics into culture and practice, which I think is the key for any successful revolution. As a 17-year-old high school senior, I firmly believe that in the next few years we will see a resurging student revolutionary movement. I plan on taking part in it.

High school revolutionary
Pennsylvania

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Black/Red View

by John Alan

If the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary were only carnivals, we could dismiss them as third rate dramatics, but we have learned bitterly from history that third rate right-wing "political drama" can be an entr'acte (opening act) to a more repressive or even a fascistic society, if not strongly opposed from the beginning by racial minorities and the working class.

Those right-wing politicians didn't shoot-up a beer hall in Iowa or in New Hampshire to gain national attention, as Hitler's party did to get elected. There was no reason for them to do that, because they had television to send out their ideological message to the white middle class on such issues as balancing the national budget, a tough on crime policy, the moral absolute of family values and giving the states the authority over welfare. Each one of these issues is super-charged with a race and class bias, the most volatile issues in American politics. For instance, giving states the authority over welfare is a return to one of the most grievous and bitter struggles that African Americans engaged in to maintain their freedom in this country.

John Hope Franklin, the well known Black historian, observed in his book *Race and History* that: "The most powerful direct force in the maintenance of the two

Stench of racism in Republican primaries

worlds of race has been the state and its subdivisions" which gives the white community the right of guardianship over a segregated American society.

Dr. Franklin was following the historic conflict between state rights and the federal government as revealed in racial violence and Black resistance. Today, it doesn't take a great historian to see that the conservatives' plan to return the control of welfare to the states is a direct move to bring the poor Black communities under the hegemonic discipline of local white economic and political interests.

Recently, the Congress of National Black Churches caught the full implication of state control of welfare by announcing its opposition with the simple statement that Blacks "trust the federal government more than they trust the states." In its own way the Congress of National Black Churches rejects any attempt to return to old practices when Black security and life were placed in the arbitrary hands of the white exploiters of Black labor and the corrupt abuse of state racist politicians. This was a horrible historic experience for African-American people; it made racism the law of this nation and it took more than eighty years of struggle to overcome it legally, extending from the post-Reconstruction period to the Civil Rights Movement.

Of course, today's so-called social conservatives can't create a racially divided, unequal society on the non-existing material conditions of the 19th century or, for that matter, even on the economic conditions of fifty years ago. But, racist ideologies and practices do linger beyond their original social beginnings by finding new roots in existing material conditions. Thus, the decline of the industrial might of the inner cities has created its opposite,

a permanent army of unemployed Black workers along with a corresponding welfare bureaucracy. This has shifted the focus of American racism from how to exploit Black labor to preventing the African-American community from revolting by a stricter control over the welfare it gets and building larger prisons to incarcerate new generations of unemployable Black youth. Here we have the two cardinal political aims of "social conservatism," disguised as "welfare reform and tough on crime."

Last month Pat Buchanan, Bob Dole and Lamar Alexander really asked their 98% white voters in Iowa and New Hampshire to endorse one of their respective new national racist policies. Pat Buchanan's got the endorsement. Buchanan, the voice of the conservative Christian Coalition campaign, focused on insecurities of the white middle class, their fear of losing their jobs to non-white immigrants and their perception that African Americans are given special advantages. He demeaned African Americans, smeared the character of a lesbian by name and said he does not like Jews, and yet he won the New Hampshire primary.

We may not know exactly what the political events in Iowa and New Hampshire portend for African Americans. But definitely, a new kind of social relationship between Black and white is being formed. The exact nature of any kind of new relationship has to be defined and articulated by African Americans. This must be done now!

Black World

(continued from page 1)

secution of Marcus Garvey whose 1921 trip to the Caribbean genuinely did stir up Black revolutionary sentiment against U.S. and European imperialism both in the region and in the U.S.

When it comes to being a willing tool of authoritarian governments abroad in their shadow boxing with U.S. imperialism, Farrakhan can find examples much closer to home in the history of the Nation of Islam. For just as right-wing congressmen and Justice Dept. officials have raised the issue of Farrakhan being an agent of Libya's Muammar Qaddafi because of reports that Qaddafi held out before a bedazzled Farrakhan the winning lottery ticket of \$1 billion, so Farrakhan's mentor Elijah Muhammad did time for sedition during World War II because of his sympathies for imperial Japan.

However, the real ghost that haunts Louis Farrakhan is that of Malcolm X. Malcolm's 1964 trip to Africa and the Middle East, following his break with Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam, not only brought him into contact with a different, multicultural face of Islam, but more importantly, moved Malcolm toward a socialist perspective in response to the African revolutions. Farrakhan's Africa/Middle East tour is the absolute reversal of Malcolm's famous hajj.

COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY CATECHISM

It is precisely this reversal of revolution into counter-revolution in African and African-American history that Farrakhan, not so ironically, chose to carry out over Black History Month. In Iraq, Saddam Hussein, originally a puppet propped up by U.S. imperialism in its maneuvering against Iran, is embraced by Farrakhan as a defender of his people against the West, when in fact Saddam has killed more Muslims than any other ruler.

And in Iran, Farrakhan again becomes a willing tool of the most reprehensible reversal of revolution into counter-revolution when he helps the fundamentalist regime that usurped the 1979 Iranian Revolution to celebrate the 17th anniversary of the revolution, as if Khomeini and the mullahs, and not the revolutionary Iranian masses, had actually overthrown the U.S.-backed Shah.

Against the Black non-Muslim liberation struggle in the south of the Sudan, Farrakhan aligns himself with the Muslim military rulers of the north. Where world attention had been focused through the hard work of human rights activists on the human rights atrocities carried out by this most reactionary of fundamentalist regimes against Muslims and non-Muslims alike, especially women, Farrakhan executes another one of his counter-revolutionary reverses. The blood of bleeding Africa cannot be so easily washed off the hands of these devout despots.

Finally, in the company of the Nigerian military dictatorship whose repressive boot is firmly planted on the neck of the Nigerian masses, and whose execution of Ogoni environmentalist and writer Ken Saro-Wiwa outraged the world, Farrakhan panders to raw authoritarian power with an appeal to give the country's military thugs 3 more years to lay the ground for "democracy."

And yet, as evidence that neither resistance to the military regime of Gen. Sani Abacha, nor the spirit of the Million Man March can be so easily subsumed, the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights and the Campaign for Democracy in Nigeria issued statements condemning Farrakhan for acting as an agent of the military government. "They said his support of the military government contradicted the principles of the Million Man March, which would not have been allowed by the military government in Nigeria," reports Mississippi's *Jackson Advocate* (2/15-21/96).

While Farrakhan's Satanic reverses should come as no surprise, still there is a kind of ideological V-chip in the thinking of some on the Left which screens out the persistent refusal of the Black masses to place the destiny of their self-determination in the hands of Louis Farrakhan. Unfortunately, this V-chip may yet become an element in the game of race-baiting that Farrakhan and the white establishment are preparing to play with the American mind.

Baton Rouge protest



A mass demonstration of 10,000 marchers protest Gov. Mike Foster's racist affirmative action policies, in Baton Rouge, La.

Shell Oil in Nigeria

Lagos—Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria, the biggest oil operator here, said a move to cut staff had caused picketing by some workers at its head office. "What is happening is that a few junior staff are at the gate turning people back from the company premises," said a company spokesman. "It has to do with a voluntary severance programme that the company is trying to implement," the spokesman said. Shell pumps about half Nigeria's nearly two million barrels per day of crude oil.

Witnesses said about 15 workers of Shell stood at the entrance into the company's Freeman House head office in central Lagos and had been turning non-staff members and contractors back from the imposing building.

Staff were told last week that some of them would be laid off and they had not been given any details of the plan. "We are extremely anxious about this move by management," said one of the workers.

Shell has been in trouble in Nigeria since last November's execution of nine minority rights activists. Western pressure groups have urged Shell to leave Nigeria in protest at the hangings but it has rejected such pressure and is also going ahead with a \$4 billion gas project, the largest in Africa.

A London newspaper reported that Shell had been importing arms to Nigeria to equip police guarding its facilities. "People have to understand the Nigerian situation better. Government alone cannot do everything," he added.

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PRISONER, ILLINOIS

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SEE LITERATURE AD ON PAGE 7.

To Ken,¹

I
You were right,
Mister B is dead.²
he didn't die in Lagos
but in a Port Harcourt jail

The author is dead
So what is learnt
my deconstruction friends?
and in this case his corporeality
suggested a possible reality.
Now we are left
with that sickening feeling of contamination
Oil for life.

In Ogoniland, where the oil is red with blood,
the poet who spoke
of the rights of nations
inside nations inside nations,
is annihilated.

The economics were simple to see
like any of those schemes thought up by Mr B.
The General made his millions simply
by lowering the price on Ogoni life
Oil for money

Those who speak of Africa—
World Bank, Royal Shell, and Military Rule
—keep me wondering:

What place for the Ogoni
in this Africa which killed its sun?³

II
Called an irritant by the state
They drowned the playwright in industrial waste,
Well, there's money in that
for those that think like millionaires⁴
in this time of ethnic cleansing and chemical
affairs

III
Surrounded by men from the military tribe
and with a quiet nod from the corporate scribe
the man is hung.
From here we heard only the sound
of putrid diplomacy
and the rotten english⁵ of international law
(The old boxer forgot his/story)⁶

In front of large crowds
your oratory on survival was thought too heretical
and your declarations to the youth too political
The simple truth, that life is dear
reminded the General of his worst fear
that people hate him for good reason
The ever cheapening price of the person
for oil: the real treason

IV
On the world-market
those who line their pockets with shell-money
drink Perrier not Ogoni water
delta'd with oil

—F. Shelley (November 15, 1995)

1. Kenule Saro-Wiwa [1941-1995], along with eight other activists, was murdered by the Nigerian state on November 10, 1995. They were involved in a campaign against the destruction of the Niger Delta which is an area rich with oil. Saro-Wiwa was an internationally renowned writer and journalist. In 1991 Saro-Wiwa decided to abandon "everything" and devote himself to the Ogoni struggle and became a leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni people (MOSOP). Shell Oil, which is implicated in his murder, has now pulled out of the Ogoni region, but only after wrecking its eco-system.

2. Mr B is Dead is the title of one of a series of children's books based on the television series "Basi and Company," written and produced by Saro-Wiwa.

3. "Africa Kills Her Sun," the title of one of Saro-Wiwa's short stories in *Adaku & Other Stories*.

4. In Saro-Wiwa's Mr B series, Mr B wears a tee-shirt, "To Be a Millionaire, think like a Millionaire."

5. Title of a short story in *Adaku & Other Stories* and the subtitle of *Saza: A Novel in Rotten English*.

6. A reference to Nelson Mandela who endorsed "the quiet diplomacy" approach of John Major toward the Nigerian authorities.

Editorial

No serious observer questions that outright genocide—the attempt to exterminate a whole people as with the Jews and Roma (Gypsies) of Europe during the Holocaust or as with the systematic massacres of Armenians in Turkey during World War I—occurred in Rwanda, Central Africa in the spring of 1994. Many are also pointing to the danger of a new round of genocide this year both in Rwanda and in neighboring Burundi.

During 1994, more than 500,000 people met their death. Members of the minority Tutsi group, many of them children, as well as members of the Hutu majority who were committed to or suspected of being committed to a multiethnic society, were killed by the army, by militia groups and by civilian mobs.

The present Rwandan government, which came to power in a civil war against the perpetrators of genocide, is Tutsi-dominated but to a great extent committed to the creation of a multiethnic society. Despite this, every excuse has been made by the rich Western powers to deny Rwanda economic or military aid. This is in part due to indifference to the lives of African people, and in part because the present Rwandan government is viewed as anti-French, the French having been the region's dominant imperialist power for the past several decades.

It is true that the new Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF)-dominated government has not lived up to the hopes that some had placed in it. Some independent Hutu leaders willing to work with the Tutsi-dominated RPF have been pushed aside. There have also been incidents in which vengeful RPF soldiers have attacked Hutu civilians, although stern measures have been taken against the perpetrators in these incidents. Suspected Hutu war criminals, some of whom may not be guilty, are being held in overcrowded, inhuman conditions.

Yet none of this can justify the fact that leading perpetrators of the genocide live today at complete liberty in Zaire, Kenya and other neighboring countries. In Pol Pot style, the leaders of the genocide totally control the vast refugee camps where over a million Rwandan Hutu are now living, having fled the advances of the RPF in 1994. A vast amount of international aid is being sent to support civilian refugees, while the leaders of the genocide lord it over them. While refusing to permit Hutu civilians to return home, these former members of the government, the army and the militia are also acquiring arms, reportedly with clandestine help from the French and Zairian governments. Among these refugees there is

a nearly complete denial of the 1994 genocide.

After almost two years, only a handful of suspects have been arrested—one country which has been willing to carry out such arrests is Zambia—and are to be tried at a United Nations War Crimes Tribunal in Arusha, Tanzania. Kenya, Zaire and France, however, are refusing to cooperate with the Tribunal, Kenya openly, the other two surreptitiously.

In neighboring Burundi, the situation is reversed. There, members of the Tutsi minority, who had dominated the whole region during the pre-colonial era, still control the army and have also organized a militia-like group. The army and the Tutsi militias have undermined the democratically elected multiethnic government, which has a Hutu president and a Tutsi prime minister. They have begun to "ethnically cleanse" the capital, Bujumbura, driving Hutu civilians out into the countryside. They have also assassinated government leaders, including the president elected in 1993 and several members of parliament. A chauvinist Hutu resistance movement is also gaining headway in the countryside. In 1995 alone, 10,000 people were killed in these conflicts in Burundi, most of them civilians.

Where does the responsibility lie for these horrors? Part of the explanation lies of course in the role of Western imperialism and the capitalist world market. In both Rwanda and Burundi, colonizers, first German and then Belgian, rigidified the pre-colonial system of domination, treating Hutu and Tutsi as separate "ethnic" groups, even going so far as to register their group membership on identity cards. Since independence, France and other powers vying for influence in the region have armed both the old Hutu chauvinist regime in Rwanda and the old Tutsi-dominated one in Burundi. The crisis of the world economy over the past two decades and the demands for austerity by international bankers have also placed tremendous pressure on the population of the two countries, and this in a region where land was already scarcer than anywhere else in Africa.

But that is only part of the story. We need also to face squarely the fact that the genocide in Rwanda and the massacres in Burundi are driven by internal forces as well. These African ruling classes have stopped at nothing to whip up inter-group hatred as a way of staying in power. It is a hallmark of the retrogressive 1990s that such campaigns of chauvinism and ethnic hatred have resulted not only in passive support for oppressive regimes, but in the case of Rwanda, also in the actual par-

ticipation of thousands of civilians in killing their own neighbors, right down to tiny infants.

These horrors are by no means limited to Central Africa. Similar events have been unfolding in Bosnia since 1992. We need to stop ignoring the events in Rwanda and Bosnia and to see them for what they are: harbingers of our own future if we do not think out and act upon a method of resistance to retrogression—including right here at home. That is what we Marxist-Humanists have been trying to work out. We urge our readers to join us in this effort.

VOICES FROM WITHIN THE PRISON WALLS

The cancer of corrections

by Carl Moss

(Continued from last month)

Historically, the problems that Illinois is now facing began with the Thompson administration's "new prison" building craze. The bureaucratic malignancy of the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) became the spawning ground for countless new contracts for goods and services necessary to provide for the needs of the growing prison system. This new growth industry in the state became carcinogenic when organized labor lobby groups persuaded the state's lawmakers to remove "At Hard Labor" from the mittimus papers that accompany a convict from the court. The various businesses that supplied the prisons were realizing undreamed-of profits.

Soon the profit potential inherent in the business of corrections was recognized by organized labor and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), with their own agenda, began to infiltrate the various facilities that IDOC had built. AFSCME now has over 14,000 members and supports a powerful lobby group in the state capital.

Many special service providers sprang up, offering things like institutional food, medical, library, telephone and even recreational services. Contracts were awarded to the lowest bidders and these particular parts of the correctional equation were removed from the immediate concern of IDOC. These special service providers, motivated by the profit visualized and their own greed and avarice, have buried their respective snouts in the well-protected public teat supplied by IDOC. The public does not want to know what happens behind these walls, so the corruption continues with impunity.

Ever since the Cold War ended, the American media have sought ways to increase profits and garner a greater market. To promote sales in the absence of Cold War gloom and doom, the media decision makers created a "fear of crime" hysteria and would select the most heinous crimes for exploitation. The sales of papers and TV market shares reflected the success of the ploy and the concept grew unrestrained. After all, this was not fiction. The crime wave was real, as real as the fertile imaginations of the various media reporters could make it.

Responding to this media charade, the public elected wave after wave of "tough-on-crime" politicians. These lawmakers wrote and passed the laws their constituencies demanded. These new laws caused the malignancy of corrections to feed upon itself and grow even more. Motivated by greed, driven by profit and operating in the open with impunity, the corrections business is secure in the knowledge that the general public just does not want to know what goes on behind the walls of the state's replicating carceral.

The media-generated, election year, anti-crime hype, "truth in sentencing" and three strikes legislation are causing the corrections malignancy to metastasize. It will continue to feed on the tax base until the state's fragile infrastructure is lying in ruin.

Future historians will puzzle at the reasons this great society destroyed itself. The statistics will show that more and more prisons and tougher laws will do nothing to reduce the rate at which crimes are committed. In fact, the crime rate was on the way down when the correction profiteers figured out the potential profit that could be realized. This was about the same time that the Cold War ended and the media did not have any international gloom and doom to try and sell papers with. "Good news" does not sell papers, so the most heinous of crimes were featured in bold headlines. Of interest here is that FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting) magazine reported that the coverage of crime rose 250%, even though the actual rate for almost all crime has been on the decline for over ten years now.

The states of Florida and Texas realized the futility of the "lock-em-up and throw away the key" hysteria and passed referendums banning new prison construction. This allowed prison populations to exceed the limits imposed by the Eighth Amendment's cruel and unusual punishment clause and the federal government stepped in to run the prisons. The first thing that the government did was to ban all new arrivals. This backed up the local and county jails and slowed down the judicial process to make Kafka look good. Then they started awarding more and more good time to clean out the prisons as rapidly as possible. At one time they were awarding up to twelve days good time for every day served. This meant that for every year of sentence, an inmate only had to do one month. This was pretty sweet for most inmates but very difficult for the victims, prosecutors and courts that put the bad guys away.

("Cancer of corrections" concludes next month)

'The tragedy of Nikolai Bukharin'

The Tragedy of Bukharin, by Donny Gluckstein (Boulder: Pluto Press, 1994).

With the aim of presenting a revolutionary alternative to Stalinism and market socialism, this book takes up Nikolai Bukharin, one of the most important Bolshevik theoreticians during and after the Russian Revolution. What grips the attention of the author, a follower of Tony Cliff, is that Bukharin's economic theory makes a category of "state capitalism."

Donny Gluckstein sees Bukharin's theory as "an accurate description of the Stalinist system," since he foresaw state and monopoly merging into one entity, even though Bukharin saw state capitalism only as a result of growing concentration and centralization of capitalist monopolies. To the end he insisted that, in Gluckstein's words, "the very fact of the 1917 revolution ruled out state capitalism in the USSR."

The task Gluckstein sets himself is to explain how this analyst of state capitalism ended up as one of the revolutionaries most responsible for the transformation of the Russian workers' state into state capitalism. Turning to Lenin's critique of Bukharin in his Will for being "scholastic" and not understanding the dialectic, Gluckstein points to this philosophic inadequacy as the root of the flaws of Bukharin's theory and practice.

But what does Gluckstein mean by "dialectic?" He means that Bukharin's thinking was one-sided, abstract and deterministic, all of which is true. But he reduces the heart of the dialectic—the relationship between subject and object—to the question of the vanguard party as mediator between the two, as expressed in Lenin's theory of "democratic centralism." This, "the fundamental achievement of Leninism," is the only thing Gluckstein unreservedly praises as "dialectical."

The book's only mention of Hegel is one paragraph that quotes Bukharin describing Hegel's dialectic as thesis-antithesis-synthesis, which is not Hegel's concept. Far from pointing out the error, Gluckstein merely asserts that Marx did "make use" of "thesis, antithesis, synthesis—but applied them far more fluidly than Bukharin." Such a basic lack of comprehension of the dialectic does not stop Gluckstein from adorning his prose with the word "dialectic." But it does keep him from even mentioning Lenin's crucial encounter with the Hegelian dialectic.

Gluckstein's omission is all the more fantastic given that his very first chapter begins with the event that impelled Lenin to the dialectic: the collapse of the Marxist Second International upon the outbreak of World War in 1914. Since this left revolutionaries "politically disarmed," Gluckstein says, the "weapons of Marxism would have to be resharpened," a task "tackled" by Luxemburg, Trotsky, Lenin and Bukharin.

Gluckstein's concept of "resharpening" stops where Bukharin stopped—at economic analysis of the latest stage of capitalism—so he finds Bukharin's Imperialism and World Economy "arguably the most important contribution" and dismisses Lenin's Imperialism as "far less theoretically ambitious" and "of chiefly historical

interest." Totally missing is any awareness of Lenin's search for subjective new beginnings in the dialectic of revolution, from the national liberation movements to worker and peasant soviets. Bukharin's rejection of this non-capitalist revolutionary dimension Lenin called "socialist economism."

Bukharin's economic theory is where the perils of his philosophic deviation from the dialectic appear most sharply. He conceives of the development of state capitalism as the growing organization—and therefore growing rationality—of the economy. Even after the revolution, the subject in his theory is not the workers so much as it is the planned, organized economy, or science, or the technical intelligentsia. Proletarian revolution is necessary to break the final barrier to the organization of the world economy.

As Gluckstein puts it: "It is this economic struggle [competition between autonomous economic units] that imposes an imperative of exploitation upon all the participants. State ownership and planning can also be methods of capitalist exploitation if their context is competition between autonomous national units."

To both Gluckstein and Bukharin, then, capitalist exploitation issues not from the character of the subject-object relationship in the process of production but from competition in the market.

The working class becomes an object in Bukharin's theory. It is "an organized class subject"—the subject is really the State into which even the trade unions must be absorbed. While Gluckstein does criticize Bukharin's tendency to relegate the workers to a passive role, he himself articulates the same reduction of subject to object: "Even after a successful revolution in an industrial country, while workers will rule they will continue as producers, an object of production."

In Marx's theory, the workers even in capitalism—let alone "after a successful revolution"—were subjects in the production process, although capitalism's dialectical inversion makes the object, the machine, dominate the subject. Bukharin's reproduction of that dialectical inversion as theory is exactly how he created the theoretical premises for Stalin's state capitalism. Gluckstein's uncritical acceptance of it reveals that his affinity with Bukharin is deeper than simply the concentration on the state in economic analysis.

What direction does this book give us today in the quest for liberation, for a revolutionary socialism not hemmed in by capitalism and its ideologies? A tendency that tries to comprehend Stalinism on the basis of the very theory that created Stalinism's theoretical premises cannot show a way out of today's crises.

Instead, it offers the pathetic complaint of post-Marx Marxism, incapable of grasping the role its own aversion to the Absolute has played in the failure of new revolutionary socialist beginnings to arise from the collapse of Communism. The need of the age is the kind of dialectical new beginning that breaks out of the limits of post-Marx Marxism as well as of the retrogressive politics of the 1990s.

—Franklin Dmitryev

North and South, women fight Right's assault on poor, feminism

(Continued from page 1)

ously women view the need to overcome racism in the movement is seen in the popularity of a new book by Midge Wilson and Kathy Russell, *Divided Sisters: Bridging the Gap Between Black Women and White Women*. The authors believe that "Society will transform itself only when women decide together to fight social inequality in all its various forms, whether based on race, gender, or class." Conference participants took a step in that direction and made fighting for affirmative action a priority.

Those attacking affirmative action want to frame it as a white-Black competition and play the race card, yet affirmative action has helped white women the most. Women in California didn't wait for Feminist Expo '96. In March 1995 they began what one National Organization for Women (NOW) leader called "a fight to the death" to defend affirmative action, emphasizing "We're forming coalitions everywhere." In February Katherine Spillar, national coordinator of the Feminist Majority, announced that a coalition including the YWCA, NOW and the NAACP was recruiting college students who would "be all over the state" of California to fight for affirmative action.

RIGHT'S ALL-OUT ATTACK ON WOMEN

It is not only affirmative action and abortion rights that are under attack. In this all-out assault the Right is intent on destroying welfare and health care; demonizing poor women, unwed mothers, African-American women; and denuding women's studies and women's history of its activist revolutionary content.

The Republican candidates are wallowing in vicious gay-bashing. In February, almost all supported a Christian Coalition rally in Iowa whose speakers promised to "send this evil [homosexual] lifestyle back to Satan where it came from." And as Buchanan rants about judges protecting "criminals, atheists, homosexuals, flag burners, illegal aliens—including terrorists—convicts, and pornographers," 16 states are rushing to make laws denying recognition of same-sex marriages.

Even as we go to press, March, which is Women's History Month, and March 8, International Women's Day (IWD), will find women fighting back across the nation. That is true in Chicago where the theme of the IWD march through downtown will be "Women's Future is the World's Future." And at San Jose State University in California students are so concerned with reactionary U.S. politics that the Women's Center is planning a huge IWD event of discussions on issues like welfare, racism, affirmative action and fighting the Right.

The biggest battle is against the anti-democratic hypocrisy and punitive mentality of the Republican's and Clinton's determination to drive women and children on welfare into the night. While Republicans talk endlessly of individual rights and Clinton boasts that "the era of big government is over"; all the forces of federal and state governments are now being unleashed on poor women and children. End-welfare-as-we-know-it-Clinton is likely to accept the nightmare plan that the state governors recently proposed.

Not only would that plan eliminate federal guarantees of assistance to poor children, it would allow states to impose their twisted "morality" on poor women. Clinton has already given the green light to every wild, unproven, poorly researched scheme states have come up with. Wisconsin is ending welfare altogether in three years,

Japan lecture on Hegel

(Continued from page 4)

but he criticized all culture as having first been good for fighting against superstition but now imprisoning us by the sort of thing Marx was to call "the fetishism of commodities."

And I would go so far as to say that the whole three volumes of Hegel's *Philosophy of Religion* is the greatest attack on the so-called "vanguard party" that we have ever seen. He does with the church, although he is a Christian, what we want to do against the Stalinist party. He is saying, "Look at that, Christianity came in because finally we saw that, as against only a few being free who were great enough to be philosophers, Jesus insisted that man as man is free. But this one little church, the Catholic Church, said they were the only interpreters and would not let us have a direct contact with God."

Here he is, he is supposed to be a Christian, a Lutheran—those who were supposed to have corrected the excesses of the Catholic Church—and yet he says Religion is not it, I have to go to Philosophy. It is why he is always accused of being a hidden atheist. And he was. But the point we are stressing is that even though we are in the second department, we saw Spirit was still alienated and under the discipline of culture. Then we saw that Religion has been perverted and that man and not the church must decide what will finally evolve. That is what brings us to the final stage of Absolute Knowledge.

He comes to Absolute Knowledge and says, "Look, this is history. It has moved in these stages as the phenomena of the spirit of man. There is also the science of the spirit, whether in religion or actual science. And they will unite to form Absolute Knowledge." The Absolute Knowledge of history and science uniting as one in Phenomenology becomes the transition point to Science of Logic and to Philosophy of Mind. Everything always ends in some Absolute. It is Absolute Knowledge in Phenomenology, Absolute Idea in Science of Logic, and Absolute Mind in Philosophy of Mind. It is always striving in that direction.

(Concludes next month)

limiting cash benefits to two years, and if women can't find work they will be assigned jobs. In Illinois, the "job training" consists of being handed a photocopy of two-month-old want ads and told to get job interviews.

States can now force young women to live with their parents, demand they marry, name the fathers of their children, dictate how many children they can have and when to go to school. In this "democracy," it is so much a crime to be poor that Long Island is fingerprinting welfare recipients and other states want to do the same.

Perhaps the most telling restriction of all is that a woman's welfare check could be cut off if she can't find or refuses work. Women in the South rightly call this kind of coercion "slave labor." The real welfare goes to corporations as in Mississippi where companies pay welfare mothers forced to take minimum-wage no-benefit jobs \$1 an hour and the state pays the remaining \$3.35.

'I WILL FIGHT FOR PEOPLE'

A Black woman union organizer in Mississippi—a state that grants women one of the lowest welfare pay-



Women, immigrants in Tucson, Ariz. challenge sexist and anti-immigrant retrogression epitomized by Patrick Buchanan.

ments in the country—spoke to *News & Letters* of how that law can be used to break unions as well as a woman's spirit: "It's not just that they are telling you that you have to give up Medicaid and food stamps to take these jobs. They are saying that if you get in a fight with the supervisor and you quit, you will get nothing. If the plant goes out on strike and you don't cross the picket line, you will get nothing. They want you totally in their power."

Thus it is not only young women in the North who refuse to accept the "constraints of what exists" as the student at Feminist Expo '96 put it. Black working women in the South have been casting their own deep challenge to this reactionary society. In Tennessee, Mississippi and Alabama, minimum wage is the norm with \$6.60 an hour considered a "decent wage"—even when the employer is a giant like Tyson's Chicken. In 1990, 21% of all Black families in the South earned less than \$5,000 a year. A Black woman in Mississippi commented, "You can work all month in the catfish plants, make less than \$1,000, and be eligible for welfare." Even in Tunica County, Miss., where gambling and investment has entered, the annual income for African Americans is less than \$6,000 a year per person.

In the face of these hardships, Black women working in poultry, textile, apparel, and catfish processing are changing the face of the South by unionizing their workplaces and raising profound questions. While they may not call themselves feminists or Women's Liberationists, their challenge to existing society is as deep and includes the African-American and labor dimensions.

The struggle to unionize the plants, as well as the experience of being on welfare, has given them a unique view. As one woman said, "The best thing we can do for welfare mothers is to make Mississippi a union state, instead of what they call a 'right-to-work' state."

These Southern women contribute a determination and a Reason that is born of a history of struggle for civil and labor rights. One woman expressed it as "the testing of fire." They reveal not only a desire to fight for freedom, but the knowledge that it can happen—a knowledge that seems missing when a part of the women's movement settles for Bill Clinton instead of George Bush, or is satisfied with abortion being legal even though it keeps getting more and more difficult to get. The catfish worker organizer said it this way: "I will never lie down and take anything anymore. The 1990 strike gave me a feeling in my heart to fight for people as long as I live. No matter what happens, I will always have this."

What she will "always have" is what Karl Marx meant when he said that those fighting for freedom are "individualized through the process of history." It is the knowledge, born through the struggle against "the plantation mentality" of Southern life and labor, that women can change their world, they can become free.

A union steward in a food preparation plant whose mostly Black women workers recently won a year-long strike and who was involved in the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi as a teenager put into words what self-development—when it is a self-development whose aim is freedom—can mean. In discussing what Raya Dunayevskaya had written on the Montgomery Bus Boycott she was struck with the description of how "The

greatest thing... was its own working existence."

She concluded, "When I look at people today who were involved in fighting for freedom, I'm amazed at what is in them, what we are capable of doing. It's something you would never have known—which they never would have known—if they hadn't been involved in the struggle."

DEFENDING REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY

When history is shown as such a tangible and concrete movement towards freedom—as these voices reveal—and when the Women's Liberation Movement is turning to fight the gutting of welfare and affirmative action, it's no accident that the Right Wing has widened its attack to include women's studies courses and women's history classes across the country. (See "Silver Rights' history ongoing today," p. 2.)

In an attempt to destroy these studies and to move universities to the Right, college trustees, many appointed by Republican governors, recently formed the National Alumni Forum whose purpose is to hunt out incidents of what they call "political correctness" on campuses and micromanage colleges. Typical is Christian Coalition member Charles H. Cunningham who says, "I'm planning to go course by course in the James Madison [University] manual to see what I don't like and what I think doesn't have a place on our campus."

Women's studies has been under siege for some time from anti-feminists like Christina Hoff Summers who protests that if the history taught is radical, it's not legitimate because it has an agenda; and Karen Lehrman, who whines that women's studies courses are too "touchy-feely" and therefore not scholarly. The only new tactic is that they try to call themselves "feminists." Historian Catharine R. Stimpson described them well in a recent issue of *Dissent* (Winter 1996): "Erupting with exaggerations, making a part of the whole, the whole shebang, the genre distorts and lies without the slightest sign of shame."

The sweeping scope of the new stage of retrogression that the November 1994 elections brought forth, now being deepened by the all-out race to the reactionary bottom led by Buchanan, who reveals nothing less than a form of counter-revolution moving towards neo-fascism. That reality makes revolution so compelling a drive that new forces for freedom arise. In the attempt to transform the oppressive reality, many are looking to break out of "the constraints of what exists."

To achieve that break, a total philosophy that doesn't disregard this oppressive reality but is determined to transform it is a necessity and part of taking responsibility to create a totally new human world. As the food processing worker in Memphis, Tenn. said: "All the labor and Civil Rights Movements come back to human issues. That's why I want women to get together. I think it's up to us to start something."

Teachers, students walk the line in Oakland strike

Oakland, Cal.—On Feb. 15, several hundred teachers walked out of the Oakland public schools, striking because of overcrowding in classrooms, sub-standard pay and working conditions. Striking teachers and students outside Oakland Technical High School were stopping scab teachers, getting paid double salary, from coming in to the parking lot as the cops let the scabs through.

A young woman student from Skyline High School told me, "We are here to fight for our right to an education. We don't have enough books for our classes or desks for all the students, and I don't remember the last time we had heat in the classrooms!" A student group called the Oakland Student Political Union, formed originally by students at Skyline, has been joined by students from other schools supporting the strike.

Also, high school students from the University of California group Berkeley Students for Affirmative Action have joined striking students, linking the substandard conditions in the Oakland schools to racism and segregation. While protesters chanted, "We're here to fight for youth liberation, stop racism and school segregation," one striking teacher told me, "It's no accident that it's the Oakland schools which are substandard, as Oakland is a mostly Black city. The students are right to say the issues of affirmative action and this strike are joined."

At another school for younger children, one striking teacher held a sign reading, "Money for books, not Buicks." She explained, "The superintendent of schools, who makes three times as much as the highest paid teacher, just got a new Buick, funded by the school district. Her secretary and the secretary of the school board also got new Buicks. We had to raise money for toilet paper last year, and we don't have enough books! This kind of spending at the top is outrageous!"

Many parents have united with teachers to organize "strike schools" in local churches. The strike schools are staffed by teachers and are drawing a lot of support from families who want to honor the picket lines while finding ways to educate and care for their children.

The teachers hope to settle the strike quickly, but rumors are spreading that since the school district is profiting from the strike, they'll try to hold out to make a quick buck. The administrators also hope to turn the citizens against the striking teachers, which is why teachers are urging people to call the school board to let them know we support the striking teachers and students of Oakland.

—Julia Jones

Youth

1871 Paris Commune fires imagination today

by Maya Jhansi

The inventions of the unknown demand new forms.

—Rimbaud, 1871

This March marks the 125th anniversary of the Paris Commune. Until I joined the radical movement, I had never heard of the Paris Commune which, though it was an historical event significant to the world, was still not covered in any of my world history courses.

On March 18, 1871, the working people of Paris armed themselves and struck out against the parliamentary government which had succeeded Napoleon III and which had begun to capitulate to Prussia in order to bridle the revolutionary intensity of the Parisian masses. The Parisian masses, in turn, attacked all the organs of the state—the army, the police, the bureaucrats—and declared themselves the Paris Commune.

The Paris Commune re-organized the whole of society on the ground of freedom, challenging all social relationships including the man/woman relationship. Women's participation in the Commune was central from the very beginning. Education was made open and free for all, and workshops into models for proletarian democracy. Workers took power into their own hands so that foremen and political representatives were elected by them and always subject to recall.

The March 18th manifesto of the Paris Commune is worth quoting at length: "The proletarians of Paris, amidst the failures and treasons of the ruling classes, have understood the hour has struck for them to save the situation by taking into their own hands the direction of public affairs....They have understood that it is their imperious duty and their absolute right to render themselves masters of their own destinies, by seizing upon the governmental power."

MARX AND THE PARIS COMMUNE

The new that erupted in the Paris Commune was captured philosophically by Marx—not after the event, as past history, but while the event was in process. What Marx so brilliantly recognized in the self-emancipation of Paris was that the working class did not just take over the ready-made state machinery, but set about smashing the state. The self-government of the Parisian workers superseded the state form—Marx called this, "the political form at last discovered to work out the economic emancipation of the proletariat."

In the Paris Commune, Marx saw the absolute opposite of capitalism and this gave Marx a new concrete insight into the degenerate nature of capitalist society. This is most explicitly seen in the section that Marx changed after the experience of the Commune, the section on the "Fetishism of Commodities" in Marx's greatest work, *Capital*.

Marx shows that under capitalism commodities assume a mystical character that reduces human relations to "material relations between persons and social relations between things." What the unleashing of human creativity in the Commune revealed to Marx was that the

perversion of human relations under capitalism is not just a matter of appearance, but the way things really are under capitalism. The commodity fetish makes these perverse human relations appear natural and eternal.

By smashing the state-form and ending the hierarchic division of labor, the Parisian workers demonstrated how a totally new form of freely associated labor could release itself from the despotic conditions of the commodity form and reorganize society on human grounds. This new form of human society put into stark relief the truth of capitalism by illuminating, through its own working existence, what Marx in 1844 had called "transcendence as objective movement."

Through the experience of the Commune, what became clear to Marx is the need to position oneself in the future in order to strip away the veil of the fetishism of commodities in the present. The logic of freedom manifested by the Paris Commune was thus captured theoretically by Marx—signalling a new point of departure in thought which escaped the brutal wrath of the trembling state powers.

'YOU CANNOT KILL AN IDEA'

The Commune was brutally brought down during "Bloody Week" in May 1871 when over 25,000 communards were massacred by the reactionary government led by M. Thiers. Though the Commune was defeated, its vision of freedom refused to perish in the flames of the counter-revolution that engulfed Paris.

It lived on both in Marx's philosophy of liberation and

in the minds of generations of revolutionaries that followed—from Lenin whose *State and Revolution* was so influenced by Marx's writings on the Commune, to the dauntless Chinese youth of the Sheng-Wu-lien who challenged Mao by asking why the real communes in China were not built on the model of the Paris Commune. For these Chinese youth, the Paris Commune embodied a vision of the future that allowed them to see through the "Communist" rhetoric of Mao's China just as the Commune had given Marx a glimpse of the future, allowing him to unveil the true character of capitalism.

There has never been a greater need than today for a vision of freedom to help us cut through and ultimately transcend the multiple forms of alienation that dominate our world. That is the enduring lesson of the Paris Commune for us today.

Bourgeois historians often overlook the significance of the Paris Commune, generally dismissing it as an "experiment in freedom" doomed to failure because of the "inherent nature" of humanity or some such garbage. It is no wonder that Marx called the Paris Commune "that Sphinx so tantalizing to the bourgeois mind." The bourgeois mind, which sees the perversity of human relations under capitalism as eternal, self-evident truths, cannot comprehend it.

The Paris Commune revealed that freedom is possible by creating something totally new. That's something that the rulers would like us to forget. Remembering it on its 125th anniversary is important for us today not only as a remembrance of the past but as a vision of the future alive in the dialectic of liberation.

Youth in Revolt

by Kevin Michaels

Nicaraguan students conducted a sit-in in front of a Managua police station on Feb. 2. They were protesting the detainment of over 100 of their fellows who were arrested during the occupation several days earlier of a government building which was being used as the headquarters of the Pope's visit to the country. The students' activity is part of a campaign against the government's failure to meet constitutionally mandated levels for higher education funding.

* * *

Six thousand young people marched in the South African town of Potgietersrus on Feb. 6 against an apartheid holdover. They protested a local primary school's maintenance of a whites-only admissions policy.

* * *

Columbia University students occupied the Dean's office on Feb. 6 to demand the administration's commitment to the establishment of undergraduate ethnic study programs. The students want an Asian-American program, a Latino studies program and more resources for the Institute for Research in African-American Studies, as well as the broadening of the core curriculum to include multiethnic contributions.

* * *

Yale teaching assistants, fresh from their own struggle with university administration, are honoring the picket lines of striking Yale clerical and technical workers by moving their classes off campus. The 2,600 members of Local 34 walked off their jobs Feb. 8 in the face of serious contract demands, including wage cuts and outsourcing of union jobs to temporary agencies. The TAs who have been unsuccessful in gaining university recognition of their union, the Graduate Employees and Students Organization, are encouraging faculty members to hold classes at alternate locations.

Getting out from under horror of DCFS

Chicago—DCFS (Department of Children and Family Services) sucks because they take people's kids away from them for B.S. lies. First of all, they took me away from my parents for a whole bunch of lies. Second of all, they took my daughter away from me because they said that I neglected her, and that I was an irresponsible parent. I feel that the only reason is because I was under age, was in DCFS custody myself and was a runaway.

When I was nine years old, I remember the day so clearly when the police came and knocked on my mother's door. They handcuffed my mom and dad and were pushing them around like they were some kind of animals. Then they pulled me in one room and pulled my brother in the other, and started asking me all kinds of questions about my mother and father. Was my mother abusing me? Was my father or mother on drugs? And I told them no. But then they kept pressuring me, asking, "Are you lying for them or are you telling the truth?" So finally I told them the truth, because I wanted to help my mother and father get off drugs. But I didn't know that it was going to hurt my brother and me in the process.

So then after that, they started tearing the place up looking for all kinds of drugs. I was just crying, yelling and screaming on the bed. I was hollering at the police, "Why don't you all just stop? Why don't you just leave us alone?" My mother was just drunk out of her mind. She didn't really know what was going on. She kept say-

ing, "Don't take my babies away from me!"

Then they took me and my brother down to the police station and they locked my mother and father up. My auntie came to pick me and my brother up from the police station and that is how we came into DCFS custody. We moved in with her.

At first everything was all right but she started beating on us so I ran away to my grandmother's house. But after that my grandma took really sick, so then I went to live in a foster home. I lived there for a long time and hated it because my foster parent's son and his father raped me. They took turns on me every night. When I told the DCFS worker, she didn't want to believe that I had been raped. She said I just didn't want to be there and that I was making it up. I called my mother and I told her that they were raping me in that home so she told me to run away from there. So I ran as fast as I could go.

A short while after that I went to live with my daddy's brother, but I didn't like it there because his wife hit us for things like eating food that we were not supposed to have. They hit us and they took my money from me.

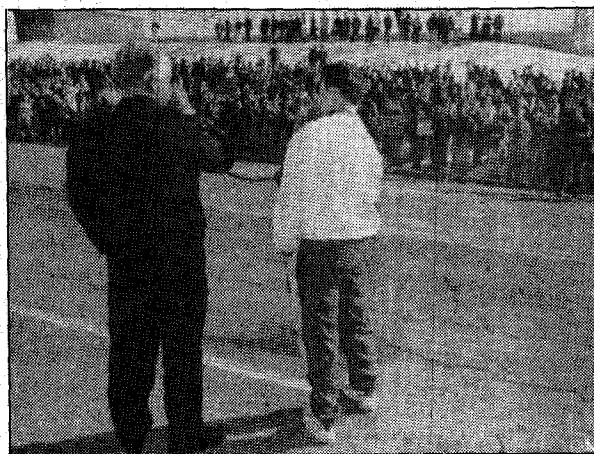
Then I came to the north side of town, and that's where I saw this boy named Red. I was only 13 and thought that I was in love with him. Two years later I got pregnant with Ebony. She was about three months old when I lost custody of her because I didn't have anyone to help me. I was young and didn't know how to take care of her and didn't know where to go with her.

By this time I was not with Red anymore. I was with Robert, who is father of my second daughter, Crystal. Robert and his grandmother helped me get my baby back. If it was not for them I don't know what I would do. I am happy to have my baby home with me, so every chance I get I try to help people that have a problem with DCFS. DCFS took me out of my mother and father's where I was not being abused, and put me in an environment where I was being abused, just like they did my daughter. Some ways I am glad that I saw what I saw when I was nine years old so that I don't live my life like my mom and dad.

There is one more thing that I would like to say. My case worker helped me out in a lot of ways, and I would just like to thank her for everything that she has done for me and my baby. She and my lawyer were the only people who listened to me in the system.

—P.K.

Salt Lake City students protest anti-Gay policy



400 high school students protest East High School ban on clubs for Gay students.

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Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Islamic fundamentalism continues to gain in Turkey, up to now the world's most secular predominantly Muslim society. As we go to press, the Refat or Welfare Party, an Islamic fundamentalist group which already controls the country's two largest cities, is poised to form a coalition government with the more secular and conservative Motherland Party. In national elections held last December, the fundamentalists received 21% of the vote, more than any other party. Motherland and another conservative party, True Path, each received around 20%.

Many observers are suggesting that economic discontent among the urban poor has been a key factor fueling the rise of the fundamentalists, who attack the corrupt political establishment and Turkey's ties to the Western powers, and who propose demagogic schemes such as going back to the traditional Islamic prohibition on loaning money at interest. In addition, Refat has won adherents for its strong support of the Chechen cause.

It is also true that a discriminatory voting system, which requires a party to win at least 4% nationwide, denied the leftist and pro-Kurdish Peoples Democratic Par-

Oil blockade in Mexico

A three-week blockade of over 60 oil wells by mostly Indian peasants in the Mexican state of Tabasco ended Feb. 15. The protesters demanded compensation from Pemex, the state-controlled oil industry, for years of pollution that has lethally damaged surrounding farmland and fishing waters.

During the siege, peasants declared Tabasco a "territory of resistance." They blocked roads and sat in around wells. Organizers reported that 5,000 people participated in the civil disobedience. Local authorities called in federal police and soldiers to attack the unarmed protesters.

The siege was called off by the left PRD (Party of Democratic Revolution) which had supported the blockade. The PRD, engaged in negotiations with the ruling PRI (Party of Institutional Revolution) for bourgeois democratic reforms on the national level, fought against fraudulent election results in 1994 for governor of Tabasco.

While the government is trying to quell the revolt in Chiapas state with initial peace accords enlarging Indians' civil rights, the targeting of Pemex brought out other simmering conflicts. Oil was nationalized in Mexico over 50 years ago in an act of defiance against the U.S. Oil, the national "patrimony," was supposed to support social welfare programs—health care, workers' benefits, etc. But oil revenues have been used primarily to maintain the PRI in power. After the disastrous economic collapse of December 1994, oil revenues have been used nearly exclusively to back \$12.5 billion in U.S. loans.

Oil workers have also demonstrated against government plans to go ahead with selling off parts of Pemex secondary operations to foreign investors. While the government claims it needs private investment for Pemex to maintain its current levels of production, it clearly cares nothing about environmental concerns and daily living conditions in the oil fields. Parallel to the struggle of Africans in Nigeria's Ogoniland, a fisherman on the Gulf of Mexico, said, "Pemex doesn't acknowledge how it damages our homes, our lakes, our streams."

Turkish fundamentalists reach for power

ty any representation in parliament despite its having received over 50% of the vote in predominantly Kurdish southeastern Turkey.

But this does not explain why older secular and leftist parties, which are also critical of the pro-Western "free market" economic policies of the recent government, fared so badly. The Democratic Party of the Left polled only 15% and the Peoples Republican Party, the old organization of Ataturk, only 11%.

While the Turkish fundamentalists are more pragmatic than their counterparts in Algeria, the Sudan or Iran, they have waged a cultural war nonetheless. One target is the Alawites, who comprise over 15% of the population, but who are regarded as heretics by the fundamentalists. This is because, among other things, their religious services are attended by men and women together. Another target is Turkey's women, who are being pres-

sured to wear head scarves. Yet another target are secular youth and intellectuals, with fundamentalist mayors threatening to shut down cafes where alcohol is sold. Each of these issues has allowed them to appeal to obscurantist sentiments among a population wracked by economic crisis.

Evidently sensing something to his liking in these developments, on Feb. 18 Louis Farrakhan made a stop in Turkey to have dinner with top fundamentalist leader Neomettin Erbakan. Farrakhan stopped by after first having visited with and praised the slave-trading leaders of the Sudan, the reactionary clerics of Iran (whom he extolled for their "democratic" system) and the genocidal Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

Bosnians resist NATO limits

One of the most revealing moments in the Bosnia tragedy came in February, when the Bosnian government embarrassed NATO and the U.S. by arresting two top Bosnian Serb generals suspected of war crimes. NATO occupation forces, who have refused to arrest even a single war criminal, first tried to get the two generals released. Finally, NATO was shamed into extraditing them to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague after Chief Judge Richard Goldstone publicly asked that they be brought to him for interrogation.

Meanwhile, the Western press is giving considerable attention to the flight of many Serbs from suburbs of Sarajevo now coming under Bosnian government control. The implication is that the reality of a multiethnic Bosnia is becoming a thing of the past. However, the press has not been reporting the considerable number of Serbs who have been moving back to their former homes in Bosnian-controlled areas such as Tuzla, where they are being welcomed back with open arms by the Muslims.

A quieter but no less important struggle for Bosnia's soul was being launched in Sarajevo by forces opposed to any narrow religious or ethnically based nationalism in the territory controlled by the Bosnian government. Sarajevo's leading independent newspaper, *Oslobodjenje*, announced that it was starting a new weekly, *Svijet* (The World).

Oslobodjenje's editor-in-chief, Zlatko Dizdarevic, stated: "We have entered into a period of struggle for power between two projects for the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina. We will support the line of tolerance and democracy in order to combat the forces of nationalism. The paper will defend the dream of a multiethnic Bosnia which we had at the beginning of the war."

From a Chinese dissident

The world was shocked by the decision of the Beijing regime to convict Wei Jingsheng to another 14 years in prison. The charge against him was that Wei Jingsheng wanted to overthrow the government. Is Wei Jingsheng, an individual who advocates peaceful and gradual evolution to democracy, capable of overthrowing the Chinese government? Or is it just the oversensitiveness of a nervous regime?

Since the beginning of 1993, the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party have been very wary about the situation in the countryside. When Vice Premier Zhu Rongji inspected Guangxi province at the beginning of 1993, he said: "The extortion in some localities is very severe, leaving peasants with no choice but to hang themselves. This time we discovered nine suicide cases. How many cases actually occurred, no one knows." But according to an official survey released at the beginning of 1995, the suicide rate in urban areas is 8.7 cases for every 100,000 residents and in rural areas the figure is 21.4 for every 100,000.

The authorities made special efforts for a news blockade in 1995 so that much of the true situation is unknown to the rest of the world. An uprising of over 100,000 peasants in Fuzhou district of Jiangxi province when the homes of corrupt officials were looted and peasant riots in a small town near Hangzhou, the capital of Zhejiang province, have all been hidden from the outside world, even from Chinese in other provinces.

The frequent strikes and demonstrations by the 20 million unemployed workers or those who receive no pay from their factories is the most worrisome problem for the Communist authorities.

The incompetence of the regime to control the corruption of officials, to reduce the gap between the rich and poor, and to solve the social problems has made the people increasingly angry. The stagflation which began in 1995 and the decline in living standards have exacerbated their anger.

All of these crises have deepened the discord within the ranks of the Communist party: the dissatisfaction and dissent among cadres at different levels has placed great pressures even on the top echelon. It is the opposition from within the "fortress" itself which alarms the Communist party the most.

Therefore, one important motivation for re-convicting Wei Jingsheng was to intimidate the opposition forces both within and without the Communist party. The prosecutors are perfectly clear that Wei Jingsheng's power to overthrow the government can never be compared with the forces created by the corruption and incompetence of the government which has ruled the country for nearly half a century.

—Liu Binyan

Excerpted from "Who can Overthrow the Chinese Government" in the Jan. 1, 1996 issue of *ChinaFocus*, P.O. Box 209, Princeton, NJ 08542.

Irish truce shattered



Thousands demonstrated in front of Belfast's City Hall, Feb. 16, calling for renewal of the cease-fire in Northern Ireland.

On Feb. 9, an 18-month cease-fire in Ireland was shattered when the Irish Republican Army (IRA) began a series of terrorist bombings in London. That very week, hundreds rallied in Belfast to call for a resumption of the cease-fire.

To be sure, the IRA's elitist and ultra-vanguardist concept of "armed struggle" is a major factor in the breakdown of the cease-fire. Tragically, its militaristic politics have come to replace the original grassroots popular struggles by the oppressed Catholic minority of Northern Ireland, a struggle which began in the late 1960s with a far different conception, the humanism of the American Civil Rights Movement.

But the intransigent, arrogant policies of the British government and the Protestant leaders of Northern Ireland are equally responsible for the carnage in London. For 18 months, they have totally stonewalled the Irish nationalists, refusing even to begin negotiations with the full range of groups representing the Catholic minority, including the IRA. One of the biggest losers today is Gerry Adams, who had apparently tried to steer the IRA away from terrorism, but received no concessions in return.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Buchanan's phony turn to labor



by John Marcotte

Pat Buchanan and his ideas are not about to go away. Since early March, Congress has been debating more repressive immigration laws. Buchanan is trying to use racism and anti-immigrant scapegoating to divide a growing labor movement awakening in this country. He must not succeed.

To understand Buchanan, we have to remember that U.S. capitalist society is divided into two, and only two, main classes: capitalists and workers. Capitalism is the right to dispose of the labor of others. There are therefore two, and only two, ways of thinking: the boss's (capitalists') way and the workers'. There is no in-between. The capitalist sees workers as things, as "variable capital" which will increase the value of his capital. The worker knows her or himself as a human being, not an object. The humanism of working people is what gave life not only to the union movement, but to the Civil Rights Movement.

The worker wants to be a full human being, not just a part of the machine. The labor struggle is not just about wages, though that material necessity is important. It is the unity of material and ideal, it is about respect, democracy, freedom, control over your job and over your life. We have to remember this to judge Buchanan's vow to shut the border to immigrants as the solution to working peoples' crisis in this country.

Immigration is a completely capitalist phenomenon, caused by the dictates and needs of capital, not human beings. Whether the immigration is that of American workers from the Midwest "rust belt" to the South, or Mexican workers to the U.S., or peasants in China leav-

(continued on page 3)

Black World

Two indignant hearts of Black feminism



by Lou Turner

A thinking woman sleeps with monsters.

—Adrienne Rich

At the end of last year, Rosalind Cash and Toni Cade Bambara died of cancer, both at the age of 56. While a continent separated them at their deaths (Rosalind Cash in Los Angeles and Toni Cade Bambara in Philadelphia), their lives and work stemmed from the same intersection of social conditions and historic moment which often rendered creativity independent of the free sensibilities of the artists of their generation.

A stunning Black actress who had already come of age by the 1960s (as she noted in a 1986 lecture at Smith College, she was already 30 something), Rosalind Cash witnessed the many enthusiasms and disappointments of the period. The necessary outcome of the political experiences of Black women like Cash and Bambara led to a critique of private life and personal relations.

The political experiences of the '60s inherent in their critique of private and professional life is what distinguishes the feminism of Bambara and Cash from later Black feminists. It is what evinced the warmth of life in their art and writing, and gave them their bold originality of spirit. Because she "exuded a certain intelligence and seriousness which they [Hollywood producers and directors] didn't want," Rosalind Cash leaves behind a principled body of work which escapes the Hollywood imprint of the "exotic."

In her short story "Witchbird," Bambara's protagonist Honey, who bares an uncanny resemblance to Rosalind Cash, is an actress and singer constantly fighting with directors over their "mammy fantasies." "Got to be firm about sh-- like that," Honey declares, "cause if you ain't some bronze Barbie doll type or the big 'fro murder-some militant sister, you Aunt Jemima. Not this lady. No way. Got to fight hard and all the time with the scripts and the people. Cause they'll trap you in fiction. Breath drained, heart stopped, vibrancy fixed, under arrest. Whole being entrapped, all possibility impaired, locked in some stereotype. And how you look trying to call from the box and be heard much less be understood

(continued on page 8)

Mexico: Will the civil war become total?

by Mitch Weerth

On the night of March 7 the Zapatistas came to San Cristobal de las Casas (or Jovel, as the Indians like to call it, using an ancient name) for the first time since Jan. 1, 1994 when the uprising began. Despite being unarmed, the thousands of masked women who travelled to the city surprised its inhabitants as much as the first time. They arrived in caravans of up to 11 vehicles, sending the military into a panic. They came from the far reaches of the Lacandon jungle and from the north of the state, a place called Tila that has been developing its own legacy of resistance in the past two years.

The purpose of the journey was International Women's Day. By the time the women assembled for the march they numbered near 7,000, many of them with ski masks on, some in fatigues and boots, others barefoot or in huaraches, with numerous banners flying. In the center of town they spoke. One woman, who had never spoken before publicly, said, "We are not spoken of as people, much less as women. As indigenous people we appear in no laws of this country, because for the government we do not exist."

A communique from the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) was read that spoke of the dignity of women who struggle: "As combatants and non-combatants Zapatista women struggle for their own rights as women. They also confront a macho culture that is expressed in many forms in the Zapatista men. We understand our struggle to be not against men, but it is for the rights of women. Nor are we against the mestizo (mixed ancestry), but it is for the rights of the indigenous women."

In the speeches, in the banners, the shouting and the discussions, the women's message was, above all, against the military occupation of the state. This is the tenor of Mexico today: on the one hand the lawless police and military are on a loose leash everywhere, north and south, while the reasoned voice of the nation's most oppressed has attained a permanence, a presence in daily



discourse never seen before.

Near San Cristobal, in San Andres Sacamch'en, the EZLN and a government delegation signed a first set of accords on Feb. 16 covering "Indigenous Rights and Culture" after six months of negotiations. The second round, on "Democracy and Justice," has begun but has already been stalled by the government. It refuses to discuss political reform with the rebels since they "are already discussing it with the opposition parties" and the Zapatistas "have no national standing to negotiate such a change." To which the EZLN responds: "Is the reform of the State incumbent only on the political parties or the entire society?"

To President Ernesto Zedillo's delight, the talks drag on. To his dismay, at every turn his delegation's efforts to make fools of the rebels backfires. Ricardo Robles is a Jesuit priest who lived among the Tarahumara Indians of Chihuahua for 15 years and is now the chief of the EZLN's 16 advisors (there are four members of the EZLN delegation: David, Tacho, Trini and Zebedeo).

Robles reports that "the general context of all moments of the dialogue has been this: war and no peace. From the beginning the government has been violently

(continued on page 9)

Letter from idled General Motors workers

Shreveport, La.—It's been two whole weeks since GM Shreveport laid off most of its employees because of the GM Dayton strike. Since we don't get any more news than the general public, everyone knows what we do about where we stand. We still haven't heard about unemployment benefits.

Back in January and February we were talking about how the GM Shreveport plant seemed to be building a lot of jobs although they had a lot in the field and still we were working eight-and-a-half to nine hours a day and two Saturdays a month. We had a 150-day supply of trucks in the field. Usually they have a 65- to 80-day supply. Workers were asking why are we working overtime? It didn't make sense. When you work at GM for a while, a lot of things they do don't seem to make sense, but now it's March and it makes sense. With so many vehicles in the field and at dealerships, GM sits back and makes money. Even GM stock went up in value approximately \$2 a share.

But, do you realize how stupid GM really is? It only took strikes at two brake plants to paralyze all of GM's North American plants. If only all the workers who are out could see how much control we really do have. GM needs all of its workers in order to make a profit in the long term. Sure, they are making a profit now, but what about the special orders or when they run out of the supply of cars in the field?

Another thing that bothers me is that some UAW members are still working in the plants. Why is it fair that so many workers are out, maybe with unemployment benefits, and still others in skilled trades are working seven days a week, twelve-hour shifts? This is going on at the Oklahoma City plant. And they are installing new robots there to take more workers' jobs away, taking 650 jobs and reducing them to 150.

We have been talking with transfers from Tarrytown, N.Y., and so far our thoughts and ideas are the same as many others. All UAW workers should stand beside the

people on strike and all plants should strike, especially since GM is protesting unemployment benefits to the laid off people who can't work because GM can't supply the parts needed to build vehicles.

By outsourcing, GM will cut labor again. A vehicle used to be considered a luxury, but today it is a necessity, just like food, shelter and clothes. By taking more jobs out of the country, who's going to be able to buy GM's cars? If this is a preview of things to come, it doesn't look good at all!

According to UAW Solidarity, March 1996, Mexican workers are trying to form unions. We need to all stand together, no matter where we are in the world, instead of

See Editorial on worker insecurity, p. 10.

letting the capitalists divide all workers, because we do have more power than the fat cats!

Could you imagine the impact workers could have on GM, by every UAW local getting together and going to Dayton, Ohio, to support this strike? It would scare the hell out of GM because labor could shut down GM instead of GM shutting workers out!

What has happened to the strength that unions once had? It seems that we pay union dues to be represented and to negotiate with the company. But it almost seems like the unions are a part of the company. Workers need to use their minds as well as their bodies. Our thoughts and ideas are just as important as GM's or any boss's.

ON THE INSIDE

From Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya •
Japan lecture on Hegel, Part II page 4
Introduction to a new pamphlet •
'Bosnia's challenge to revolutionary thought' page 5

What tools will dismantle master's house?

by Jennifer Pen

March may be Women's History Month, but this year, women are necessarily concerned with the present. The anti-feminist rhetoric of the Republican primaries, capitalist "downsizing," and attacks on affirmative action all called forth a direct confrontation with this sick society.

Attending events throughout the month, I noticed an increased cooperation among progressive groups as we struggle against the rulers who have targeted all marginalized people: women, youth, Black, queer, poor, elderly, labor, and immigrant. But philosophic questions seem lost in the mire of planning for rallies. The various dimensions of the Women's Liberation Movement cannot limit themselves to mere resistance, which is inherently a capitulation to the whirlpool gravity of the given.

Woman as Reason

Take for instance Urvashi Vaid, a South Asian-American lesbian, former head of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and author of a well-argued book on the state of the queer liberation movements, *Virtual Equality*. While she correctly critiques a narrow pragmatic emphasis on fund raising, her only corrective is to stress electoral politics (214).

Vaid explicitly describes her vision as "freedom-based" and asks "(f)or what vision of society do we fight?" (3), so her self-limitations are especially discouraging. While her rhetoric searches for transformation, her method yields only reformation.

Vaid stresses the need for reflection on philosophic issues of organization (218) and notes that the state is in league with cultural and social structures in blocking an emancipatory politics. But she reduces these insights to pragmatism—local chapters of preestablished national organization: "(our) pathway to political power...leads us to the locked, steel gate of antisexual cultural attitudes...we need...tools to dismantle this barrier...a new movement infrastructure and local organizing" (219).

While Vaid is correct in saying that women need "tools to dismantle" this sick society, her words evoke the late Black lesbian poet Audre Lorde, who admonished us that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about authentic change."

In this spirit, there is an increase in activity among homeless, low-income, and working-class women, with an evermore precise and total analysis of the decrepit nature of capitalism. Thus Dorothea—a Black woman from the Women's Economic Agenda Project of Oakland—noted how the rulers engage in all the wrong sorts of construction projects when they "build laws against the homeless, but they won't build apartments." Her statement is a recognition of how the system dovetails abstractions and dehumanization by denying people their material needs and simultaneously enmeshing the poor in a tangled net of legal abuses.

Bleak prospects of a future ravaged by global capitalism were brought into focus for many women at last summer's conference in Beijing. During this Women's History Month, Beijing was still a living, ongoing project: almost all events I attended were focused on the conference or referenced it often.

I think the rulers are concerned about ripple effects from the conference's economic emphasis: they fear that women's persistent collective reasoning about contemporary capitalism is inherently dangerous. Women from the industrialized world learned from their Third World

Take Back the Night!

Berkeley, Cal.—In celebration of International Women's Day, several hundred students gathered in Sproul Plaza to protest violence against women and to "Take Back the Night." Several dozen individually painted T-shirts hung in front of Sproul Hall, painted by women survivors of sexual abuse. The shirts read, "I have a voice, women will not be silenced," "I am not property," and "Freedom, Equality, & Justice," to name just a few. The Clothesline Project travels around the country serving as a voice for survivors.

Women Defending Ourselves performed a women's self-defense clinic where they emphasized that a woman is much more likely to escape an attacker if she fights back. Following the defense clinic, several speakers told of their abuse. One woman said, "I want to show that it's not something we should feel ashamed of. This rally is about women's strength. I hope other women who hear me speaking out will come speak out as well." Another woman read a poem, "I am woman. I am courage. I am only one voice but I sing to all. I am a voice of liberation."

Some who spoke challenged common assumptions about "date rape" ("some women don't date men and still get raped by men they know") and how women are supposed to say "no" before an unwanted advance is considered assault.

After the scheduled speakers had concluded, women of all ages began lining up near the microphone to tell their stories. They were young, older, students, homeless women, Black, white, Asian, Latina, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual. They were exposing their rapists, their friends, fathers, uncles, husbands, boyfriends. They were condemning the rapists who had hurt their friends, their sisters, their mothers. I was amazed at their bravery.

Chanting, "Women unite, take back the night," the protesters marched across Berkeley letting everyone know we will not be silenced, we will fight back.

—Julia Jones

sisters about "downsizing" and IMF policies. This is translating into a new consciousness—as corporate "restructuring" stings sharply, women everywhere are certain they are not thinking alone.

I believe this is what motivated Pat Buchanan's gratuitous swipe at Beijing while campaigning in Arizona. He referred to the event as a "(c)razy dingbat conference...It looked like the bar scene in 'Star Wars'" (SF Examiner 2/25/96). He thus seamlessly connected his anti-immigrant rhetoric to his homophobia: defining who the "aliens" are, then contemptuously isolating and demeaning them.

Similarly, a lesbian activist who went to Beijing described the Chinese government's daily theft of all Chinese-language materials concerning lesbian lives. Whether world leaders are "populist" or state capitalist, they don't want women to unite with each other.

To truly challenge these oppressive systems, we need what Dunayevskaya describes as the "dual rhythm of revolution: not just the overthrow of the old, but the creation of the new; not just the reorganization of objective, material foundations but the release of subjective personal freedom, creativity and talents."

Women must oppose what is, and this will require launching both marches and critiques. But revolutionary new beginnings demand more from our minds and activities. Let's not exhaust ourselves in treading water, but instead engage the exhilaration of swimming towards a new shore of freedom.

Taslima Nasreen, March 8

Editor's note: Following are brief excerpts from an article by Taslima Nasreen, the Bangladeshi feminist novelist in exile after Muslim clerics sentenced her to death for her writings. The article appeared March 8 in French in *Le Monde* (Paris).

At its birth in 1971, the state of Bangladesh recognized the principle of equal rights for men and women. Since then, the reverse has occurred: the degradation of the situation of women has only been accentuated. The reason for this situation is simple: Since independence, our country has been subjected to a deeper and deeper process of Islamicization.

The Prime Minister [Khaleda Zia] of Bangladesh has expressed her pride in having participated in the recent women's conference in Beijing. But it was by crushing underfoot the corpse of a young woman victim of men's cruelty that our eminent head of state went to Beijing to celebrate women's rights. Only a few days before the conference, this event occurred in our country: A teenage girl named Yasmine, who was working as a domestic at a home in Dhaka, returned to Dinajpur. Two police officers noticed her waiting for the bus after dark. On the pretext of escorting her home in greater safety, they had her get into their police car. They raped and then murdered her in some bushes by the roadside.

This crime aroused great outrage among the townspeople, who held a spontaneous demonstration to demand the punishment of the two police officers. In response, the police fired on the crowd, killing seven people. The day after this incident, a press release from the government claimed that Yasmine was a prostitute...as if a prostitute deserved to be raped and murdered! The same statement asserted that the rapist police officers were dedicated public servants and that the demonstrators who protested were anti-social elements.

On this International Women's Day, marches and meetings will no doubt be organized in all the corners of Bangladesh by government authorities and feminist groups led by women of the big bourgeoisie. The only ones to benefit from this operation will be the bourgeois organizations, whose members, modern ambitious women, will be able to get the attention of donor nations.

During this time, on this day, how many of us will be raped, sold, forced into prostitution, repudiated [Islamic practice of easy male-initiated divorce - Ed.], strangled, or butchered by their husbands because their parents did not pay the dowry? How many will be mistreated for having given birth to a girl? How many will be burned with acid? How many will be stoned or flogged to death by the fundamentalists? How many will commit suicide?

Religious sentiment is the greatest obstacle to the construction of a society where woman has the chance to live—in the full sense of the term—as opposed survival at the price of giving up all human dignity.

I reject totally the notion that women should respect the traditions and culture of their respective societies. An injustice committed anywhere in the world against a woman represents a defeat for all women, not limited by national borders, by [different] civilizations, or by cultural traditions. All of those who say the contrary are trying to divide women for the greater advantage of men.

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N 7

Beyond Beijing teach-in

Chicago—"We have to keep moving forward. We have to fight for freedom!" insisted Beatrice Burgos, a Native American activist, at an International Women's Day teach-in here that drew some 200 women. "We cannot allow history to repeat itself. We have to stop the amnesia and anesthesia of the mind!"

Burgos, director of a battered women's shelter, attended the international women's conference in Beijing last summer with the indigenous women's caucus. She was one of eight speakers Mar. 9 at the opening plenary of "Beijing and Beyond: Women's Rights to Economic Justice" and had brought several women from her shelter to the International Women's Day march the day before.

Burgos argued that racism did not disappear with "no Blacks or Indians" but "is alive and kicking to destroy



International Women's Day march, Chicago

the humanism of you and me." Her concern with the relation between our minds and the struggle for freedom underscored the seriousness of this teach-in.

This forum sought to continue the spirit of the Beijing conference. It also represented a crucial dialogue at a time when many of us are forced to work in our own corner on dire crises—in welfare rights, reproductive justice, labor issues. The 24 workshops ranged from Bosnia to maquiladora workers and from campus sexual harassment to women farmworkers (see story, p. 10).

The main plenary session opened with comments by Dolores Brooks of the 8th Day Center for Justice on the devastating effects for women globally of U.S. economic policies. Others analyzed ramifications closer to home, whether on welfare "reform," reproductive justice, disability rights, or affirmative action.

Jeri Linas, from Rainbow House, addressed the impact of current restructuring on women survivors of domestic violence. "People ask, 'Why does she stay?' instead of 'Why does he batter?'" Women stay because they are economically dependent on their abusers. This exacerbates the blow of welfare "reform."

In Illinois, a two-year cap has been placed on AFDC, yet battered women often take several years to attain independence, Linas asserted. A new requirement forces women to disclose the paternity of their children and meet the father at the Public Aid Office. Most shocking, a proposed reorganization of social services would place youth over 12 taken from their parents under the Department of Corrections.

But Shelly Bannister's speech spoke best to Burgos's concern with the "amnesia and anesthesia of the mind." Bannister's tale of fighting at the Beijing conference for lesbian rights continues into the present, since this was the first post-Beijing conference at which she had been an invited speaker. Lesbian rights had been cut from the U.N. Platform for Action in Beijing, although this had been the first international U.N. women's conference with a lesbian tent. Moreover, their Chinese language literature had been confiscated—not only by Chinese officials but by conference organizers themselves!

This forsaking of lesbian rights shows the most urgent danger feminists face. If we decide "women's unity" against the Right means curtailing our struggle for women's freedom, the Right has already won. The battle is above all a battle for the mind.

—Laurie Cashdan



Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

A feminist group in Swaziland, Women and the Law Society, sharply attacked Parliament member Msweli Mdluli when he blamed the current drought on women who angered the country's ancestors because they no longer wear traditional dress nor cover their heads. The women called his remarks an insult to women and to the nation's intelligence—saying even children know how rain is caused.

Feminists in Turkey, including the women's magazine, *Pazartesi*, are waging a fight to free 19-year-old Zeynep Vludag who was convicted of murdering a man who physically attacked and sexually harassed not only her, but her mother, sister and a friend. The other women have been subjected to threats, and one was demoted in her Board of Education job after the incident.

The winner of a national Canadian design competition is a memorial by Beth Alber with 14 pink granite benches each bearing the name of one of the women students gunned down by Marc Lepine in Montreal's L'Ecole Polytechnique in 1989 as an attack on feminists. Bricks on a surrounding walkway will be inscribed with the names of thousands of donors who contributed funds for the memorial in Thornton Park in Vancouver, B.C.

Moment of decision at American Catfish

Itta Bena, Miss.—We have a union recognition election scheduled for April 5 at American Catfish. This time the workers' drive to get a union at "American Cat" is going well; it feels very different than when we lost the election there in 1994. More than half the workers have signed UFCW Local 1529 cards and we have a great in-plant committee of about 15 workers. We have been out every night visiting people's homes, and workers are enthusiastic when we pass out handbills at the plant gate. There are about 210 workers now, nearly all Black and mostly women.

You want to know why everything is so different from 1994? In 1994 Solem Scott, the owner, told the workers that if they didn't vote for the union he would have an open-door policy to discuss any problems in the plant. He picked pro-union people to be on the committee; he thought he would head them off from organizing again. But in two years he's only had four or five meetings, and when workers told him about problems, nothing changed.

In 1994 he promised the workers a 50¢ raise if they voted down the union, but he never gave it. But just before Christmas, when he heard the workers were organizing again, he gave a \$100 bonus. But that didn't stop us. You can't give with one hand and take with the other. Scott still makes people work "off the clock." He tells them to come in at 8 a.m., and then says there are no fish. You sit around till 10 a.m., and then he sends you home and tells you to come back at 1 p.m., but you have wasted your whole morning, and you get no pay. It's illegal, but at American Cat, they do it.

People are so sick of things that even the worker Scott picked to be the official "company observer" at the 1994 vote is now an active member of the union in-plant committee.

mittee. She says: "Scott lied; I understand now why you need a written contract. I tell everyone you have to have a union or he will abuse us."

In the last week the company has started to really attack us; I think they realize they are in trouble. They are holding required meetings, six or seven workers at a time. They take you into an office room and show you an anti-union video, with lots of violence. They say this will happen at American Cat if you vote union. They even brought in a former Delta Pride supervisor to speak, saying that the union was no good at Delta Pride. April 5 can't come fast enough for me. We will let you know how the vote comes out.

—Volunteer organizer, Local 1529

Detroit news war widens



Detroit—Many new groups have formed out of the eight-month strike against the Detroit Newspaper Agency. One is W.I.L.D.—Women in Labor Disputes—who are primarily wives, other family members, and supporters of striking newspaper workers. They have picketed, raised money, and done information work on the strike. Both W.I.L.D. and women on strike had tables at the Detroit area wide International Women's Day celebration in March, and both received a lot of support.

Over 500 people demonstrated the following week on March 14 in front of the Detroit News building in downtown Detroit (pictured). The protest was organized under the community-wide group Readers United as the second in a series of civil disobedience actions. This time women blocked the drive-in entrance to the building and 67 people were arrested.

Most of the demonstrators were striking newspaper workers, but they have significant support from other unions including the UAW and teachers. A busload of Teamsters from Canada coming to join the demonstration was denied entry at the border. (Canadian newspaper workers in Windsor have walked on the picket line since the strike first began.)

While Detroit newspaper management has claimed that the strike is over, the continuing support for the striking workers is worrisome to them. Their circulation is still down at least 25% from when the strike began. Management still can't get enough carriers under their scheme to pay carriers a set fee to deliver papers, in effect cutting their pay. Undelivered papers are still being "recycled" in dumpsters.

Strikers and their supporters have canceled subscriptions to the Detroit News and Free Press; subscribed to the striker-published Sunday Journal (3100 E. Jefferson, Detroit MI 48207, \$15 for 3 months); and put pressure on advertisers. The community actions will continue with union members from all over the Midwest participating.

—Strike supporters

Union sellout at Profex

Memphis, Tenn.—When the workers striking Profex Medical went to the Labor Board to file charges against Teamsters Local 984 because we felt they didn't represent us properly, they told us we didn't have enough evidence. Now we need a lawyer to pursue this, but none of us can afford one.

I think that the International sold us out the third day of the strike when Local 984 President Bratcher said to go back in. The day before that International Vice President Ron Carver, had told the stewards, you proved your point, go back in, you can work better from inside. Our stewards asked: If you knew this, why didn't you stop the strike before we went out?

That morning some said we're not going back in, we have not made our point. The boss, Mr. Scott, had not even agreed to come back to the bargaining table.

Now that the strike is over, I feel Bratcher had a part in us not being able to go back to work. He said when there was an opening, he would call the strikers back. There has never been an opening.

Mr. Scott said he would protect those who crossed the picket line. He didn't take away their sick benefits and gave them what was in the contract. But now that there is no union, he might take that away.

Some of the people who crossed our line asked why we went on strike; why didn't we just stay there and take it? What that sounds like to me is saying: you're my husband, you can beat my head all you want to and I'm supposed to stay there and let you beat me.

They still want us to belong to the union. I'm not that stupid. If you didn't do nothing for me when I was in this plant and on strike, how in the world do you think I'm going to pay you some money and still you would do nothing for me? And I don't have a job, so why do I need a union?

Things are going to be better because no one regrets the strike. We have formed our own little groups, we made a club out of all of us who were on strike: Strikers Forever.

—Black woman worker

Hood stalls Local 282

Jackson, Miss.—Last month workers at Hood Furniture unanimously voted to transfer our union representation from IUE Local 797 to Local 282. Local 282 is the union we joined in the first place. This is something we have been praying for and fighting for since Local 797 was forced upon us against our will in 1993. The president of the IUE International, William Bywater, wrote a letter to Warren Hood, telling him that the representation was transferred from 797 to Local 282.

But the lawyer for Hood Furniture wrote back, saying that they refused to recognize Local 282, and our President, Willie Rudd, as our representatives. He said that Local 797 has more members in the plant than 282. This is ridiculous, because 797 members have been transferred to 282 by the vote we took. We have been running a union card sign-up, and we have about 200 members in Local 282 now. We are getting ready for a fight. The lawyer from Hood also said that the only reason people didn't join 797 was that Local 282 supporters told people not to join. We only told the truth about the slave contract they signed and the sneaky tricks they played with the company.

Now the lawyer for Hood says he won't meet with us at all. Instead, they are spreading the rumor that the plant will close if Willie Rudd is our representative. They are trying to scare people, trying to keep them from signing union cards. And it's not only the lawyer that is trying to terrorize people; it's going on in the plant.

If you get one week vacation, you can only take it the first week of July. The plant will be closed, and you won't get holiday pay for July 4. If you get two weeks vacation, you have to use the second week between Christmas and New Year's, and you don't get those holidays, and if the plant shuts down before then, you get nothing.

This week they gave out new ID cards. If you lose your card, or show up without it, you have to get a pass from the guard at the gate. Then you have to find your supervisor before 7 a.m. If he's late, or you can't find him, you're counted as late, with ½ point against you. This is under the point terror system in the contract 797 signed.

Some of the supervisors are singling out union activists in Local 282, discriminating against them. One worker was made a line leader until they saw him organizing for 282, and they busted him back down. But we will not be intimidated. We have been fighting for justice for seven years, and we are not going to stop now.

—Hood Furniture worker

Ontario public strike

Toronto—The strike by over 50,000 public servants, members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), has dragged into its fourth week. Mike Harris's Tory government is determined to follow the path laid out by New Jersey Republicans and privatize much of the Ontario public service. Smashing OPSEU is crucial to Harris's plan. A unionized workforce is not palatable for capitalists hoping to make quick profits by taking over public services.

The courage and tenacity of the strikers has surprised the Tories, who expected easy victory. On Mar. 18 the government's desperation created headlines across the world as heavily armed provincial police riot squads attacked peaceful picketers in front of Queen's Park (the Ontario legislature) in Toronto. OPSEU members were attempting to prevent Tory Members of Parliament from attending the opening of the new session of the legislature. Metropolitan Toronto police rushed to assist the strikers being pummeled by the rioting provincial cops.

OPSEU members are getting support from unions across the province, and another giant labor protest is scheduled for mid-April in the twin city of Kitchener-Waterloo. No one discounts the possibility this summer of a provincewide general strike.

—David MacGregor

Kaiser health emergency

Oakland, Cal.—"This is about...patient care!" So said health care workers at a March 19 picket line, march and rally held at Kaiser to protest Kaiser's plan to close the hospital. Based on 1995 figures the care of 167,000 patients would be threatened. This number rises dramatically if Highland General, also in Oakland, and Brookside in nearby San Pablo shut down, a Kaiser worker warned. She suggested health care "redlining" has determined which hospitals are to be targeted for closure or severe cutbacks in service: all admit indigent populations turned away by hospitals not targeted.

A speaker representing California Nurses Association wondered where 60,000 Kaiser emergency patients per year would go since ERs and CCUs in the Bay Area are already overwhelmed. Another speaker asked what would happen after a major earthquake.

A Kaiser emergency department worker reminded the crowd about the tuberculosis epidemic in Alameda County and reported a dangerous lack of TB isolation rooms in local hospitals. She also challenged Kaiser's claim of excess beds by recounting how one of her patients had to wait eight hours for a bed in CCU. Someone shouted, "They have excess greed!"

A woman from the bargaining team for Local 250 (SEIU) told the crowd Kaiser made \$800 million in profits last year, yet they have demanded from the union a three year wage freeze, erosion of seniority rights and fewer retirement benefits. Undoubtedly, Kaiser is trying to bust the unions. But, as another Kaiser worker told me, Kaiser's union-busting efforts have been helped by dissatisfaction in the rank and file. One rank-and-file worker said "management can ask for takeaways since the unions have not been able to address ordinary workers' concerns in the last few years."

Many Northern California Kaiser workers have been without a contract since October '95. A woman from Local 29 (OPEIU) may have put her finger on a real dilemma when she stressed the necessity to combine the fight for a contract with the fight to keep hospitals open. At one point she said: "We need strike action, if necessary, to keep this hospital from closing down."

The union projects a worry that a long strike would play into Kaiser's hand. A worker, on the other hand, sees "withholding of labor is a very different way of closing down. When workers strike it is not to deny care, but to go beyond the current conditions of terrible job security and deteriorating patient care."

—Participant

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

ing the land for the cities, it is caused by capital's needs. When GM shuts its Tarrytown, N.Y., plant this year, workers will be forced to emigrate to Georgia and Maryland. It may appear to the individual as a voluntary decision, but it is not about freedom. Any way you look at it, immigration is a terrible "solution" to joblessness. No worker, least of all the immigrant, is "in favor" of emigrating anywhere to find work.

Immigration, like any phenomenon under capitalism, has a dual nature. On the one hand, immigrant workers are so much labor power, brought here by capitalism to expand the value of its labor intensive industries like agriculture, garment and restaurants. The very same politicians who yell the loudest against immigrants yelled in Congress on March 5 that they need 250,000 more "guest workers" for agriculture—temporary workers with no rights at all, and 25% of whose pay would be withheld "until they returned to their countries!" They don't want workers with rights, just workers with no rights.

The other side of this duality is the immigrant worker who thinks his and her own thoughts. They are our sister and brother workers, who not only have the same needs we do, they bring with them a rich experience of labor struggle and new ideas to help revitalize our labor movement. This is where we cannot let ourselves think like the boss or we are defeated from the start.

As workers, we know we do not create low wages—the boss does. And bosses use repressive immigration laws to lower wages. Illegal sweatshops that openly flout labor laws have proliferated precisely since the 1986 Simpson-Mazzoli immigration law. Immigration law is labor law, and it is not intended to stop workers from coming but to strip them of their rights. The workers have to come because they have to sell their labor power to live, just as any worker does. Immigration law sets the conditions whereby they can be further exploited.

Buchanan would have us fight our fellow workers, instead of the conditions of their exploitation. He would have us accept the boss's thinking as our creed: competition between workers, instead of solidarity. We must fight to legalize all workers, so we can all stand up for our rights, unionize, and strengthen each other! An injury to one is an injury to all!

I don't buy the argument that there are too many workers. There is plenty of work to be done. Bridges are falling down, schools are understaffed, people need food and housing. GM forces its workers in Dayton, Ohio, to work seven days a week, like the sweatshops of New York. In the end, only workers taking over production and running things themselves, based on their humanism, can solve this problem of overwork for some and no work for others.

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From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
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Editor's Note

Raya Dunayevskaya gave a lecture on Hegel to a group of New Left activists at the end of her lecture tour of Japan during the winter of 1965-66 to engage revolutionaries in a discussion of her work-in-progress, *Philosophy and Revolution*. We are publishing it on its 30th anniversary because a serious grappling with the dialectic-proper remains crucial for any freedom movement today. The lecture is one of the readings for our classes on "Dialectics of Liberation Today." (See ad, page 5.)

Part I, in the March N&L, discussed Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* where the uniting of history and science "becomes the transition point to Science of Logic and Philosophy of Mind," the works she discusses here in Part II. The original typescript is found in the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: *Marxist-Humanism—a Half-Century of Its World Development* (# 9697). All footnotes have been added by the editors.

The *Phenomenology* just flowed out of Hegel under the impact of the French Revolution. The stages of Consciousness he talked of there were history in the form of the spirit of man. Now he comes to Science of Logic and begins to talk in terms not of stages of consciousness but of philosophic categories. Each category takes up a whole stage of civilization in the same manner as each stage of consciousness takes up a whole stage of civilization. Because we are hurried in time, I am not going to deal with the Doctrine of either Being or Essence, but go directly to the Doctrine of Notion or of Freedom, and especially the last section, "The Absolute Idea."

The Doctrine of the Notion or of Freedom is in actuality the objective and subjective way to get to the new society. That is what Lenin grasped in 1916. When he saw that it was Hegel himself who used the expression "or of Freedom" he was thrilled. He kept asking, "What has the Absolute Idea to do with it?" but the point is that he grasped what he did because [his age] had reached an entirely new stage of development, of economics, of politics.

He was compelled to return to the Logic because of the betrayal of his own comrades in the Social Democracy, and he began to stand in awe of thought.¹ He said, "Oh my God, look at what thought does. It actually not only reflects the world but creates it. Look at what this man had foreseen. Why didn't we see all of this?" And he began to try to break down what were the stages of Cognition, Analysis, Understanding, Reason. What were the stages of Judgment? What were the stages of Syllogism? How will the Universal of Socialism and the Particular of its appearance as a workers' state, a transitional society—as well as the individual and the totality—all merge in the revolution he wanted to explain and talk about? What hit him was the sudden realization that thought is so great that it had summed up a whole stage. For Hegel was the most materialist of all idealistic philosophers and Marx the most idealistic of all materialist ones.

I want to take up just the transformation into opposite because it is easier to understand, but actually we are talking about the Doctrine of the Notion and of Freedom. I will take up all the people who are trying to do something in an academic way and not getting anywhere precisely because they not only do not have the proletariat in mind, but also do not stand in awe of thought, even though they are philosophers.

Both Marx and Lenin stopped at the Absolute, even though Lenin went further in the Absolute Idea. Marx came to the part where Hegel says this all ends in the Absolute and, on the one hand, said it doesn't mean anything because Hegel returned to a closed system of thought. But, on the other hand, Marx saw it does mean something because he was always returning to it. In his 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," Marx finishes with *Phenomenology* and deals with Absolute Knowledge. He then says he will go through Hegel's whole system and reach the same point with Absolute Mind in his *Philosophy of Mind*. Then Marx quotes two paragraphs from Absolute Mind and the manuscript breaks off.² And that is the problem of our age.

One of the central points in the Absolute Idea, just before Hegel reaches what we call the "second subjectivity," is a sentence which reads, "The self-determination in which alone the Idea is, is to hear itself speak." Everybody knows what self-determination means to nations, but they don't know what self-determination means to ideas. Lenin grasped it because he was deeply immersed in the self-determination of nations as an impulse to bring on the proletarian revolution. He now saw that the self-determination of ideas also has various stages of high development and breaks into two. There is a movement from practice where the self-determination is to hear itself speak. Where it speaks elementally in the proletariat it is, so to speak, instinctive. And there is also a movement from theory which doesn't come so elementally and may have many pitfalls. At the point where the theoreticians have to listen to the masses the question

Lecture on Hegel in Japan - Part II

'A summons to grasp spirit of the times'

is: how will the two unite?

Suddenly Hegel brings in a lot of jokes "in sympathy." He begins to laugh at what everybody says about the Syllogism and that in Hegel it stands for Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis. That is a lot of nonsense; it doesn't stand for any such formal triad. Hegel begins to make jokes about people who construct mechanically and says it could be three, or four, or five. And when he gets to five, because you really do not have a beginning since every beginning is a result of some other mediation, Hegel says, "Even in the fact that the whole answer is in Subjectivity—because the unity of the theoretical and the practical idea occurs in Subjectivity alone—it really isn't your first negation of anything, it is the second negation."³

We cannot go into the details of this now, but I do want to say that in the last two pages of the chapter on "The Challenge of Mao Zedong" in *Marxism and Freedom*, instead of a conclusion I present an idea of what I am going to develop in *Philosophy and Revolution* on "two kinds of Subjectivity." There is the petty-bourgeois kind like Mao's and the real kind that comes from the proletariat. But in that chapter I have just noted it and I haven't showed how they would unite because that is the problem that I am working out in *Philosophy and Revolution*. The new, the greatness, the problem for our age is to solve how the unity resolves itself in "second subjectivity."

The approach of Marcuse and other academic Marxists is to give up at this stage, to run away. They think it makes them great materialists, but it doesn't. They say that [Hegel's concept of the] Absolute Idea is the result of the fact that he lived in a pre-technological age where mental and manual labor were so separated. They say that it was the beginning of industrialization and not the end. They say he ran back to what he was before. I completely and totally disagree with that argument, because Hegel ran back to what he was before on the question of the state, but not in the Absolute Idea.

The theoretician I consider the most serious on this question is Karl Lowith who is a Christian and said, "That is all that Hegel deserves because he wasn't, so to speak, a true Christian. He laid the foundation for Marx, he laid the foundation for atheism, he laid the foundation for all that we have suffered since. So Marx is the true inheritor of Hegel and God be with you if that is what you want."⁴

Marcuse, because he considers himself a Marxist (and academically, he is), is trying to say: 1) the Absolute Idea is pre-technology. 2) What we have to do is forget that part (about the Absolute Idea) and take reality. To Marcuse reality is that the proletariat is impotent and hasn't made the revolution for him, hasn't proved itself, didn't make the revolution Marx had predicted. And 3) he (Marcuse) does recognize "second subjectivity," but interprets it as meaning that the intellectual will do it and bring you to the new stage. It is against these three serious arguments that I want to show what I feel is the problem of the Absolute Idea.

I want to discuss it all within what we call the "historic barrier." You come to the end of all that you can say because history has now presented you with the new problems. On the other hand, why is it that certain people, who are not as great as Marx or Lenin, just by living in a different historic age, are compelled to deal with these problems? For example, whether or not Marcuse considers me a romantic, in his Introduction to *Marxism and Freedom* (which was not reproduced in the Japanese edition) he said in essence that I am great in the analysis of Marx, as Marx, and that there had been nothing original since the Lukacs period until *Marxism and Freedom*. But when it comes to the mass of material I accumulated to deal with the reality of today, he disagrees with it, and mainly it revolves around the role of the proletariat. So I am a romantic.

3. This refers to the "subjectivity" which Hegel calls the "turning point" in the effort to surmount the separation of Notion (the Idea of Freedom) and Reality: "The Negativity which has just been considered is the turning point of the movement of the Notion...for the transcendence of the opposition between the Notion and Reality, and that unity which is the truth, rest upon this subjectivity alone." See Hegel's *Science of Logic*, Johnston & Struthers trans. (New York: MacMillan, 1929) p. 477.

4. See Karl Lowith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche: The Revolution in Nineteenth Century Thought* (New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winson, 1964).

But the truth is that the intellectuals, including the Marxist intellectuals, had not been able to break down either the humanism of Marx or the fact that it broke off (in Marx's 1844 *Essays*) at the Absolute Idea. The new stage for the few of us who were trying to work it out came from the masses. I'm talking about the miners' strike and all the upheaval in World War II.⁵ Hegel has a word for it. He says it is only the concrete that demands a new stage in philosophic cognition. The new stage comes only when your philosophic categories just don't



Raya Dunayevskaya (second from left) in Japan, 1966.

answer what has come from below. He, the idealist, recognizes that fact while the so-called materialist Marxists, including the highest of them, Marcuse, don't recognize that fact.

So I want to end on what I began with—the need to give ear to the urgency of the times and the summons to recognize the spirit of the age by recognizing that "second subjectivity" must again be broken into two. First is what the proletariat is going to do. They are going to do it anyway, so we better begin listening. The other is what theoreticians must do. Their task isn't ended just because the impulse comes from below. They have to first begin to work it out, not just to satisfy themselves with quick political answers. And the working out of that subjectivity of the theory of our age of the Absolute Idea, in the concrete form of philosophy, and theory and politics, means that we are just beginning. There is no point in saying anything about "realizing philosophy" if we haven't done that. That is the task of our age. And that is why it is going to be the central point of *Philosophy and Revolution*.

5. See *A 1980's View: The Coal Miners General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.* by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya (Detroit: News & Letters, 1983).

Meyer Schapiro, 1904-1996

The death of Meyer Schapiro, one of the century's leading art historians, has received long and respectful notices in the mainstream press. Not surprisingly, his commitments to revolutionary Marxism during the 1930s and 1940s have been barely mentioned.

After 1936, Schapiro broke with the Communists in order to defend Trotsky against Stalin's Moscow Frame-Up Trials. During the late 1930s, he served for a year as the editor of the *Marxist Quarterly*, a serious but short-lived journal which tried to be an open forum for a variety of Marxist standpoints.

In the 1940s, Schapiro continued to keep in contact with revolutionary groups. In 1949, he was in touch with Raya Dunayevskaya. His letters during this period show an interest in her project of translating and publishing Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks*.

In a letter to Raya of March 19, 1949, he wrote: "I don't share your great enthusiasm for Lenin's marginalia, but I am impressed by the fact that Lenin was able to immerse himself in Hegel during the war and to find inspiration from philosophy on the eve of the most important event in his life and perhaps in all history."

Despite his reservations about the actual content of Lenin's *Notebooks*, Schapiro thought it was important for them to appear in print, writing Raya on March 26: "I will gladly submit them to Oxford and other publishers." In this letter, he also referred to Alexandre Kojève's new book on Hegel and to Maurice Merleau-Ponty, whom he described as "a great enthusiast for dialectics and an admirer of L.T. (Leon Trotsky)."

Although nothing came of this effort in the 1940s to publish Lenin on Hegel, these letters illustrate Schapiro's serious interest in revolutionary dialectics, something which distinguished him from the other more pragmatist "New York intellectuals" of the period.

— Kevin Anderson

1. When Marxist leaders of the Second International decided in 1914 to support World War I, Lenin responded to the betrayal by embarking on a study of the philosophic roots of Marxism. For more on Lenin's philosophic reorganization, see Chapter Two, "The Shock of Recognition and the Philosophic Ambivalence of Lenin," in *Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* by Raya Dunayevskaya.

2. "The Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" in Marx's *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* breaks off in a discussion of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind* at paragraph 384.

Bosnia's Challenge to Revolutionary Thought

Excerpts from Part I of a new, expanded edition of **BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: ACHILLES HEEL OF 'WESTERN CIVILIZATION'**—off the press in April! \$5 includes postage.

by Peter Wermuth

The start of 1996 may seem to present us with little more than a requiem as far as Bosnia is concerned. The combined might of four years of Serbian and Croatian aggression, a U.S.-imposed "peace" plan that leaves the country partitioned along ethnic lines, and a Bosnian government showing increasing signs of abandoning its defense of a unified, multiethnic Bosnia have all taken their toll. And yet it is precisely now that an energetic engagement with the issue of Bosnia has taken on the greatest importance. This is not because, as those who think Bosnia's struggle has receded into history would have us believe, "the owl of Minerva only spreads her wings with the setting of dusk." It is rather because, despite the many impediments standing in its way, the struggle to achieve a multiethnic Bosnia refuses to die. Its persistence, even after all the brutalities committed by the Serbs (as well as Croats) and betrayals inflicted by the West, is testimony to the depth of an idea of freedom that no might of arms can still. So long as the Bosnian people continue to aspire to a genuinely multiethnic society, we are compelled to help achieve its realization—not just for their sake, but for our own.

We posed Bosnia as the specific form assumed by the present stage of capitalist crisis. Capitalism clearly finds itself in a deep economic morass, as seen in the absolute decline in wages suffered by 80% of U.S. workers over the past two decades. Yet the end of the Cold War has removed the option of using conflict with an external superpower to divert the masses' attention from their declining living conditions. In response the rulers are increasingly promoting racism and inter-ethnic apartheid as a way to divert the masses from facing the real source of their impoverishment. It underlies everything from the attacks on welfare to the efforts to undermine affirmative action. In a historic moment in which rulers from the U.S. to the Balkans and from the Middle East to Western Europe are using the politics of apartheid to maintain their rule, the Bosnian struggle for a multiethnic society is of enormous importance.

It would have been easy for us to limit our work on Bosnia to a mere defense of Bosnians as "victims of genocide." But this would have treated them as passive victims, as objects, without digging out what their struggle is for, that is, their role as subjects. We have therefore sought to articulate the reason embedded in their struggle for a multiethnic society. This is no easy task because the Bosnian struggle emerged in an historic context in which the Idea of Socialism had collapsed throughout the world. Unlike earlier periods when the National Question was explicitly debated as part of a socialist perspective, in Bosnia a new type of struggle for national self-determination emerged in the context of a total absence of the projection of any viable socialist alternative against state-capitalism that called itself Communism. The Bosnian struggle therefore does not speak in the language of revolution which radicals have been accustomed to hearing. It means a philosophy of liberation is needed in order to elucidate the potential revolutionary significance of their struggle.

The persistence of that struggle, even in the midst of the occupation of Bosnia by 20,000 U.S. troops and the capitulation of the Bosnian government to the U.S. partition plan, can be seen in the Dec. 11, 1995 demonstration in Sarajevo of Muslims, Serbs and Croats affirming a multiethnic vision...

Our effort to universalize the lessons of the freedom struggle in Bosnia is proof of our perspective of opposing today's retrogression by bringing philosophy to bear on reality. Far from being only a question of Bosnia, this is the crux of our work here at home.

This is not to say that events in Bosnia are directly applicable to the experience in the U.S., which has always been characterized by the sharpest of racial divisions. Racism is indeed the Achilles heel of American society, the factor which forever gives the lie to its claim of "democracy" and "equality of opportunity." The unceasing resistance to this racism on the part of Black Americans defines their vanguard role in efforts to transform U.S. society. Precisely because the crux of U.S. society lies not in the class struggle "in general," but in the additive of color provided by the struggle of the Black masses, their

Correction: Andrew Kliman's essay, "Marx's law of the falling rate of profit today," on page 5 of the March, 1996 issue of *News & Letters* should have read as follows: The last line of the first paragraph in Part III of the essay should read, "Given constant real wages, new techniques adopted by profit-maximizing firms to raise their own profitability are so productive that they cannot, in the end, lower the general profit rate." The first two sentences of the last paragraph in Part III should read, "Today, only a handful of environmentalists would subscribe to Ricardo's view. Yet Marx's point also answers those who fetishize high tech as a solution to capitalism's economic crisis, and indeed any who lay the blame on an external Other, such as the 'underclass': the true barrier to capitalist production is capital itself." *News & Letters* regrets the errors.



The Sarajevo String Quartet in the ruins of Bosnia's national library.

self-activity has repeatedly inspired and/or deepened the effort of other social forces—such as labor, women's liberation, and youth—to embark on a struggle for a new society. This was seen in such diverse phenomena as the birth of Abolitionism in the early 19th century and the Populist movement at the end of the century; it was seen in the labor upsurges in the period of the CIO in the 1930s and the emergence of the youth and women's liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s. The coalescence of Black mass revolt with parallel struggles of labor, women, and youth is the key to the revolutionary transformation of U.S. society. As Raya Dunayevskaya wrote in *American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard* with regard to labor and the Black Dimension: "This parallelism is the characteristic fea-

VOICES FROM WITHIN THE PRISON WALLS

The cancer of corrections

by Carl Moss

(Conclusion)

Illinois has long been regarded as a pro-labor state. Because of this and the participation of organized labor in every stage of the corrections conundrum—from the surveys to the plans, from the construction to the staffing and even the destruction of the condemned buildings—the voters of the state have been steered away from any legislation that would limit or restrict the designs of organized labor, regardless of how self-serving (and in some instances, illegal) they appear to be.

The state's correctional officers are just about all members of AFSCME. They know that for every three or four new prisoners put into the system, they can hire another friend or relative for one of the "no-brainer" baby sitting jobs. The only requirements are a G.E.D. or high school diploma and a clean record. AFSCME has the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC), and through them the citizens of the state, in a death grip by the short hairs.

The inmate-to-staff ratio is determined primarily by the level of violence that a particular facility is able to maintain. The more violence, the more staff can be justified. Simply stated, this means the more violence, the more jobs for dues-paying union members to help support the lobby groups that influence lawmakers and prison legislation.

In California, the California Correctional Peace Officers Association has perfected this concept into something that is better than science fiction. Their lobby group is so powerful that virtually every suggestion that they make becomes law almost overnight. The average salary of a prison guard in California in 1994 was over \$55,000, and again the only requirements are G.E.D. or a high school diploma and a clean record.*

The evolutionary dynamic that California is now experiencing will soon be the standard across the nation. More and more funds will be diverted from education and the infrastructure and mandated for the business of incarceration. The only people that will profit from this new priority will be the few that are satisfied with the union pay scale or are in the business of supplying prisons with goods or services.

Instead of meeting the obligations written into the mission statement, the IDOC and the nation's prison systems are perpetuating themselves by not rehabilitating the men and women condemned to spend time incarcerated therein.

The taxpaying public is being dealt a double whammy by having to pay for the self-serving designs of the IDOC (currently at over \$800 million per year) and the fact that the men and women released and theoretically rehabilitated are not able to make a successful re-entry into society. They complete their court-ordered sentences and are freed, only to commit more crime because they have no other way to live and were not given the skills to be legally self-sufficient.

*"Lock-em-up Legislation Means Prisons Gain Clout" by Dan Macallair, *Christian Science Monitor*, Sept. 9, 1994.

Number of prisoners in U.S.A. March 1996

1, 1 5 0, 9 3 8

ture of the American class struggle. Only when these two great movements coalesce do we reach decisive turning points in United States development."

It is therefore no accident that the present effort to keep us shackled to the power of capital centers on the effort to exacerbate and make permanent the separation between these different movements. A striking example is the 1996 Republican presidential primary campaign of Patrick Buchanan. His appeal to white workers being displaced by corporate takeovers, NAFTA, and mass unemployment through blatantly racist anti-Black, anti-woman, anti-immigrant rhetoric (like the Wallace phenomenon of two decades ago) a deadly serious phenomenon. As deep as the divide between white labor, Latinos, and the Black Dimension is today, what the rulers fear

most of all is that the structural crisis of U.S. capitalism will give rise to new struggles in which these forces will coalesce. As much as the ruling establishment may pretend to distance themselves from Buchanan today, they will appropriate his message tomorrow if that is what it takes to ensure the permanent division between white labor and the Black Dimension. This must be fought, and fought comprehensively.

Yet this is not the only nefarious element facing us today. We also face the rise to national prominence of Louis Farrakhan, who seeks to obtain a mass base with his retrograde notion that it is possible for Black Americans to achieve "self-reliance" within the structures of actually existing U.S. capitalism—which of course does not stop him from hysing on and hysing on. His anti-woman, anti-labor message is likewise one of the ideological forms which the present stage of capitalism is using in order to try to divide the masses.

In 1963 Dunayevskaya wrote, "Though it is impossible to stop the momentum of the Negro struggle, its forward development can be impeded if the underlying philosophy for total freedom is in any way compromised." Thirty years later, the truth of this statement for all the freedom movements should be clear. Without seriously grappling with a philosophy that can comprehensively combat the efforts to divide the labor, Black, women's liberation and youth battles, there is no way to generate the forward movement needed to make a successful American revolution.

As Dunayevskaya noted, "The elements of the new society, submerged the world over by the might of capital, are emerging in all sorts of unexpected and unrelated places. What is missing is the unity of these movements from practice with the movement from theory into an overall philosophy that can form the foundation of a totally new social order." It is here where Bosnia's struggle for a multiethnic society takes on central importance for us all—when, that is, the concept of multiethnicity is articulated and developed as part of a philosophy of "revolution-in-permanence"...It is for this reason most of all that this pamphlet ends with Dunayevskaya's essay on "A Post-World War II View of Marx's Humanism, 1843-83; Marxist Humanism in the 1950s and 1980s."

In the decade since she wrote this analysis of our age's revolutions and counter-revolutions, we have experienced a political retrogression of unprecedented dimensions. This makes the second premeditated which Dunayevskaya singled out in her 1987 essay of special importance: "Are there ways for new beginnings when there is so much reaction, so many aborted revolutions, such turning of the clock backward in the most technologically advanced lands?" At issue is how to keep alive the new beginnings for freedom which continue to emerge, but which are today so quickly subsumed by reactionary ideologies and state powers. The need to confront this problem in a comprehensive manner makes it more important than ever to become firmly rooted in Marx's multilinear view of human development, both as it related to new forces of revolution and the relation between a philosophy of liberation and revolutionary organization. Bosnia's struggle for multiethnicity represents one, but by no means the only, challenge to work out Marx's concept of multilinear paths of human development for our day.

DON'T MISS THESE CLASSES ON DIALECTICS OF LIBERATION TODAY: HEGEL, MARX AND MARXIST-HUMANISM IN LIGHT OF THE CURRENT CRISIS

CLASS 1 • Today's
Changed World and
The Need for a
Revolutionary New
Beginning

CLASS 2 • Forces of
Revolt as Reason,
Philosophy as Force
of Revolt

CLASS 3 • Why Hegel?
Why Now?

CLASS 4 • Marx's
Philosophy of
Revolution in
Permanence: Its
Past, Present and
Future

CLASS 5 • Spontaneity,
Philosophy, and
Organization: The
Untrodden Path in
Post-Marx Marxism

Contact the News and Letters Committee nearest you.

WORKERS BATTLE WITH GLOBAL CAPITALISM

Every city has its good old boys. In Chicago, they hang out at the Union League Club, an exclusive place inhabited almost entirely by Republicans. In mid-March the League hosted a fancy dress dinner honoring two of the railroad industry's most notorious thieves, Jerry Grinstein and Rob Krebs of Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad. Over the past year, no less than eight of their workers have been killed and more than 1,000 have been injured. The lunacy of honoring such "achievements" may have been lost on their look-a-likes inside the club, but it wasn't lost on the not-yet-killed. Outside the club, arriving guests were greeted by two dozen rank-and-file railroad workers whose fliers hailed the honorees as "Robber Barons of the Year" for their "outstanding achievement in putting profits before safety." Even more telling was their haunting chant — "We come to work, not to die!"

Jan Kollwitz
Chicago

More than 15,000 construction workers took Monday off late last month in order to rally in downtown Los Angeles against Governor Pete Wilson's proposed cut of the prevailing wage for construction done for public works projects. Currently the prevailing wage is based on union wages, but Governor Wilson wants to base it on non-union wages. This would take construction workers back to pre-1930s status.

It was the 1930s Little Davis-Bacon Act that made it Federal law to set prevailing wage for public works. Seeing as most construction workers work only six months out of the year, the current wage "just gets them by" as it is. One hard hat's proposed solution for Wilson's "misunderstanding" is to "have Governor Wilson come down for a month, wear the clothes we wear, work the hours we work (in the middle of August) do the work we do, then see if he still wants to do the wage cut."

Joseph S.
Los Angeles

NAFTA has hurt many people in Mexico. Many very efficient American companies came to Mexico and drove out less productive Mexican businesses that laid off all of their workers. But now the products cost more than they did before, so we pay more, and more workers don't have jobs.

Unemployed workers
Mexico

You hear one horror story after another here. Corruption, take-overs, 30% to 40% rises in the price of electricity, gas, etc. show the rampage of the multinational corporations. When they take over a company the condition for employment is no union affiliation and the usual other McJob conditions: as minimal a wage as possible with no medical or any other benefits. It augurs an official sharp right turn in Hungarian politics, as only a demagogue alternative seems plausible to the electorate, the socialists being busy implementing the draconian and reactionary conditions of the IMF, World Bank and other reactionary organizations.

Gyorgi
Budapest

Minimum wage in Mexico is \$3 a day—and that is for eight hours a day and six days a week. We were just surviving making \$12 a day, so people making \$3 a day are living in horrible poverty.

Ex-GM worker
Mexico

The historic five-week-long Oakland teachers' strike ended. There is a goal (but not a guarantee) to reduce class size, the major demand teachers made. The parents are angry with the school board, not the teachers. The school board is expected to be recalled in the next election.

Salary increases were the other major demand. There will be a "bonus" of \$2,700-\$3,200 now and an estimated 22% raise over the next few years. But school psychologists and pre-school teachers got only a 3% raise. For teachers who have not seen a pay raise in five years, this is not a bonanza.

The most significant result of the

strike may be the fact of the strike itself and the community support it received. Just as in the Safeway strike, the almost universal sympathy for the workers is helping to break the fear of fighting back that Reagan started when he fired PATCO strikers. Maybe the teachers didn't get everything they asked for, but the fight was worth fighting.

Supporters
Oakland, Cal.

The California State Assembly just approved eliminating the requirement that employers pay workers overtime for working more than eight hours in one day. Republicans said it would make it easier for businesses to draft flexible work schedules for employees, such as a four-day week of ten-hour days. Only in a great democracy like the U.S. can you imagine workers being granted the "privilege" of working a ten-hour day! And, of course, there are no limits on how many hours a boss could force employees to work in one day. It's clearly part of a national assault by business on overtime requirements.

Ready to fight
Sacramento, Cal.

The workers here are pursuing solidarity among workers, although there are still barriers toward development of a labor unity in our country. Your news and analysis regarding the situations and development of the working-class struggle in various parts of the world have helped us gain a wider perspective on our own problems.

Center for Labor Education
Manila, Philippines

Andrew Kliman's essay on "Marx's Law of the Falling Rate of Profit Today" (March N&L) has an important discussion of how "capital itself" is "the true barrier to capitalist production" and to human development. Like the economists Kliman critiques, radical economists routinely conflate value with use-value. Then they end up projecting as the movement's goal a non-industrial world, yet one in which value still operates, since value is assumed to be "natural." This is yet another way in which, as Kliman points out, the Left's failure to grasp Marx's theory makes it hard to conceive of the possibility of an alternative to capitalism.

Franklin Dmitryev
Chicago



LEFT HEGELIANISM 1996

We recently ran across the enclosed picture of G.W.F. Hegel in a biography of Marx which was written by a committee of academicians in the USSR. We immediately thought: who could make better use of this than the N&L folks? Frankly, until we started reading N&L, we were under the impression that left Hegelianism had expired with Bruno Bauer and Moses Hess and Marx and Bakunin. We're delighted with each issue to see that this is not so.

Two N&L supporters
Massachusetts

The lecture on Hegel Raya Dunayevskaya gave in Japan back in the 1960s, printed in "From the Archives" in the March N&L, speaks loudly and clearly to the working class today. I liked how she took the six stages Hegel developed from "consciousness" to "Absolute Knowledge" in his book on Phenomenology and divided them into two "departments," where the first went from slave society to the French Revolution and capitalism, and the second was after the Revolution. I liked the way Hegel showed that, in slave society, the lord could demand anything and the slaves had to produce it, but the slave turns out to be the one who gets "a mind of his or her own." Then that mind has to be developed. Where Raya talked about the alienated soul, she likened it to what we used to call "Beatniks" in the '60s, the kind of hell-raisers that end up right

Readers' Views

where they started, because you have to go further than that. But even when you get to the Revolution and think you have reached Reason, it seems you still have to go further.

When you get to the second big "department," is the "Alienated Spirit" where we are today? She said this is where you can start identifying yourself with the State or leaders or a faction. This is where I see Farrakhan and his kind as so dangerous to the freedom movements today, because most of us haven't really developed that "mind of our own." If we had, would we still be slaves to capitalism? Would we still think we need strong leaders to think for us?

Retired worker
Whittier, Cal.

TANZANIA TODAY

Having just returned from a long trip to Tanzania, I thought a few observations might interest you. Much of the legacy of Julius Nyerere, who led the struggle for independence, is admirable. Tanzania is unique in having dealt with the problems of tribalism in a manner which preserves ethnicity but avoids destructive political rivalry over control. The gap between rich and poor is much less disgusting than in Kenya, for example. Nyerere is also one of only two of post-colonial Africa's Founding Fathers to voluntarily leave office. We were able to observe a vigorous opposition press boldly attacking abuses. There is a remnant of the spirit of UJAAMA, despite corruption and commercialization.

The sad part is that all of these partial gains of the masses are being sold off at a rapid rate. The national Tobacco Trust, for example, whose capital represents the accumulated sweat of the masses, went to R.J. Reynolds while we were there, and there is much cynicism among people, for obvious reasons.

Richard Greeman
Connecticut

FIGHTING THE RIGHT

These days the Republican presidential candidates must spend a lot of time in front of a mirror asking: "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the most reactionary of them all?" Sieg Heil, Fuhrer Buchanan! The lack of either charisma or substance of the other candidates leaves the field wide open for the Christian Coalition and other fundamentalist rightist groups to push the Republican agenda to the most extreme reactionary right, through "populist" demagogues like Pat Buchanan.

The consensus seems to be that all this is very favorable to the re-election of President Clinton, who while officially professing some kind of resistance to the overt drive to the right, de facto is implementing the reactionary Republican agenda himself, step by step. Where does all this leave the disenfranchised American voter?

Observer
Canada

As was pointed out in your report of the French strikes (January-February N&L), as against the efforts of intellectuals like Alain Touraine and Bernard-Henri Levy to support the government, a great number of French intellectuals vigorously supported the strikers. This "return" to political engagement has been building all through the 1990s. Over the last few years a number of leading intellectuals have spoken out forcefully against the genocide in Bosnia as well as a series of racist anti-immigration laws passed by the French government. Jacques Derrida is a good example. Something is definitely stirring today among both workers and intellectuals in France.

Radical professor
Illinois

There is currently a proposal on the internet that is at the CFV (call for votes) stage for the newsgroup rec.music.white-power, where anyone with a valid e-mail address may vote. "White power" racist music is not a legitimate form of music deserving of a

separate rec.music newsgroup, but a political group masquerading as a musical one. I hope we can show racists that they will not be granted a mainstream forum to promote their hate. Anyone who doesn't want a Usenet where minorities feel unwelcome and uncomfortable needs to send an e-mail message to music-vote@sub-rosa.com and vote NO in the body of the message.

Anti-racist
Chicago



VIEW OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION

I really liked the lead on women's liberation in the March News & Letters. In particular I like the fact that Terry Moon was not at all defensive. Since women are so much under attack, and there is such a virulent attack against women on welfare, it was very important to not succumb to "defending" something. That is one way one can lose one's ground. Moon presented her ground very well, and I am happy to take this issue to the welfare lines.

Feminist activist
Bay Area

Terry Moon's lead brought out the important voices of Black women workers in the South. She notes that these women might not call themselves feminists, and I think this point could be further developed. What does "feminism" mean to them? Do they feel excluded from the term "feminist" because of the racism that's everywhere in this society? Where do those two consciousnesses—white feminist and Black working-class women—meet? The article by Sonia Bergonzi was also very good, and she shows that an organization like NOW recognizes that it does need some concept of the Black dimension.

Black male revolutionary
Los Angeles

I've been told "people think you're just a bag lady." (Since I don't drive, I can't scatter things all over my car. I walk, hitch, or use our new bus system and carry library books, groceries, odds and ends, in a big red bag.) That brief observation says a lot about our society and how we're taught to think about things. It is automatically assumed that every person over 16 has a car. If one is not only walking but actually carrying things, it can only be because one is homeless.

The word "just" says a lot, too. It says that whatever I say, do, think, am, it doesn't matter. Not only have I the nerve to be female but I am not rich and not young and not beautiful. What right have I to be taking up space? Men have their problems, too, but one never hears the phrase "bag gentleman."

Joanne Forman
Taos, New Mexico

N&L's views are always distinctive and informative. Particularly your views on feminism.

Reader
Oakland, Cal.

GETTING READY

When the news came out that the Chicago police have begun special training classes to get ready for this summer's Democratic convention, two Chicago Tribune columnists wondered whether it would include Night Sticks 101 or Advanced Tear Gassing. They seemed to consider it a joke that the cops who remember 1968 are wearing T-shirts that say: "I Kicked Your Dad's Ass. Now I'm Gonna Kick Yours." I know a lot of people who also remember 1968, and they're not laughing.

Neither am I
Chicago

THE
LATINO/A
DIMENSION



What outraged so many about Mike Royko's recent syndicated column on Mexican immigrants was not that they didn't understand that the bigotry was supposed to be a satire. I certainly was aware of that. But these are trying and difficult times for Mexicans and other immigrants, legal or not. Thousands of human lives are at stake and anything that reinforces racist stereotypes is wrong. My Latino students were the first to show me the article, and they were right to be angered at seeing the epithets they are all too familiar with printed in the national press.

Mexican teacher
Illinois

I have not been here long; I came as do almost all the others, as "la migra" (INS) calls us, "wetbacks." My trip here lasted two hard months, but it seems I achieved my first goal. It was not easy. I got a job in one of the many factories which exploit us and discriminate against us only because we are Hispanic. I think I went through what we all go through: my desire, my longing to go back home was expressed in my first letters to family and friends. Now that the situation is hopeless, I remember all my good friends wishing me a safe trip; even more I remember my two daughters who are so alone in my distant and sad country. Maybe I should quote the Mexican song that says, "Though its bars are of gold, it is still a prison..."

Coming home from work on a cold winter night, I saw a human being curled up against a bus stop shelter, shivering, covered with cardboard and newspapers. I thought, "How low can we human beings fall?" Most likely this beggar found only this, instead of the happiness he or she once sought. And as for me, all I did was what we regrettably learn to do in this city: keep walking, be

selfish and go about your business. So then I asked myself, "Who in reality has fallen lower? Him or me?"

Manuel
New York

The Los Angeles media over the last month have featured instances of Black/Latino tensions erupting into fights or warfare in the county jails, in the high schools, in the streets. At the same time there are efforts—not given mainstream publicity—at forging relationships of solidarity. Take recent developments in Mothers ROC (Mothers Reclaiming Our Children) in South Central L.A. Over the years since the L.A. rebellion, the question of both Black/Latino tension and the need for solidarity have often been discussed but, although an occasional Latina would come to meetings and be warmly welcomed by the Black women there, nothing substantial developed. Now, however, a Mothers ROC chapter will soon be starting in East L.A., begun by a Latina mother who has been coming to the meetings because of her son's bogus arrest on a murder charge. This has initiated her into a journey of political activism and thought.

Michelle
Los Angeles

RWANDA AND LIBERATION

The March editorial article on Rwanda-Burundi was made much clearer to me at a second reading after reading Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon elaborates on how, after a limited liberation movement is won, the newly independent country is transformed into its opposite and becomes an oppressive tribal dictatorship.

This happens under conditions of extreme poverty and human degradation to the mass of the people brought about by colonialism in underdeveloped countries. Liberation movements will always be limited without a philosophical base (and I use the word philosophy in a Marxist-Humanist context).

Activist
Los Angeles

JAMES FORMAN APPEAL

James Forman, who was Executive Secretary of SNCC and a leader in the civil rights struggle of the 1960s, and who has continued his activity with voter registration and political education as president of UPAC—the Unemployment and Poverty Action Committee—is now having a battle with cancer. Unfortunately, civil rights work does not come with a living wage, health or disability insurance, or a retirement pension. Jim now has health insurance benefits but needs help during this time when he will not be able to maintain a normal work schedule. We want to let your readers know that they can help support Jim and his work with a contribution to the UPAC Fund at PO Box 21097, Washington, DC 20009.

Mark Levy, Karen Weissberg and
Elizabeth Sutherland Martinez
New York, Virginia and California



NATIVE
AMERICAN
STRUGGLES

A budget cut (so far undetermined) affecting the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service has led to discussions among most Indian tribes here urging greater voter participation. Partly due to a historically justified negative attitude towards the government, large numbers of potential Indian voters have not been interested in participating. Now some tribes, like the Chickasaw Nation, headquartered in Ada, Okla., have officially begun a voter registration campaign.

Contributor
Oklahoma

On March 7, the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe learned that Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt had decided to throw the Tribe off the last remnant of its traditional homelands in Death Valley. Pauline Esteves, Acting Tribal Chairperson

and tribal elder, observed that this latest action by the federal government is just one more attempt at "ethnic cleansing."

Since 1933, the National Park Service has done everything in its power to deny the Tribe's historical claims, pretend we do not exist, and to get us out of the Park. While only about 50 of our members managed to maintain a continuing presence in the Valley on this water-starved, sand-blown 40-acre parcel, the Park Service has treated us like dirt. Over the years, this arrogant agency has controlled our every movement, cut off our power, severed access to our sacred sites, fined us for engaging in our traditional practices and bulldozed our homes when our people vacated them to return to traditional summer camps.

To add insult to injury, this administration used the Desert Protection Act to legitimize the government's decades-long racist policy to get Indians out of national parks. This liberal act has been used by the Clinton administration as the "final solution" to its Indian problem in Death Valley. We welcome your support. Write to us c/o:

Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
PO Box 206
Death Valley, CA92328

SOCIALIST 'DEMOCRACY'

Why is the ISO so afraid of News and Letters? When we tried to sell N&L at their conference on socialism a few weeks ago—which they advertised all over New York as open to the public—they tried to chase us out of the building. The conference was in a few rooms in a huge Columbia building, and we were in the hall. They insisted we could only be outside where there was no one and threatened to seize our papers. They may have been upset because we had just taken the floor in their plenary session to talk about the need to study Marx's philosophy and to work out a new relationship between philosophy and organization. All their people were talking about the need to organize the workers in a manner that assumed ISO already had all the theory and organization anyone could ever need.

N&L members
New York

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Black/Red View

by John Alan

Recently The San Francisco Examiner published a revised version of an address by Professor Clayborne Carson of Stanford University entitled: "The Founding Fallacy—Is Multicultural Democracy Possible In America?"

Since Professor Carson is the director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Papers Project and was an active member of the Civil Rights Movement, one would expect that his address before the members of the elite Commonwealth Club would focus on how American capitalism has corrupted the immanent humanism of multiculturalism every time it appears as a viable alternative to ethnic strife. Unfortunately, this didn't happen.

Nevertheless, the address did contain an element of historic truth by pointing out that African-American masses have played a crucial role in breaking down the political barriers to the practice of freedom in the United States. In Carson's words: "African Americans not only have sought constitutional rights, they also have changed the prevailing conception of civil rights and the role of government in providing those rights. African-American freedom has therefore transformed the United States into a nation that differs greatly from the vision of its 'Founding Fathers.'"

But this statement has only a phantom relationship to the main theme of his address, which focuses upon the political ideals of the "Founding Fathers" as the ground for a possible multicultural democracy in America. While he notes that in practice, the Founders gave freedom and political power only to Anglo-Saxon Protestant males, he emphasizes at the same time that the virtue of their egalitarian rhetoric did provide "some values that eventually allowed some diversity within democracy."

But Carson stretches historical credibility when he finds the political ideals of the "Founding Fathers" in the activities of the African-American freedom struggles and in the thoughts of Martin Luther King Jr.

Although Carson's address is called "The Founding Fallacy," there was no serious exposition of the contradiction between the political ideals of the Founders and the actual social and economic relationships in the society they began to govern. The political ideals of the eighteenth century bourgeois revolutionaries were only abstract universals which liberated them from the decaying remnants of a feudal society. And, as a class, they became the masters of their countries and the world because the might of their economic power came from a new world market built upon the African slave trade.

A journey into this historic reality would discover that the Black freedom movements in America were not born out of the "virtue of the ideals" of the Founders but out of the contradiction between the idea of freedom and the

Carson re-animates the 'Founding Fathers'

actuality of non-freedom. Marx has pointed out that the bourgeois revolutions of the eighteenth century could not resolve the contradiction between their universal principles and the reality of class oppression and slavery without a second revolution in civil society.

Black-Latino unity now!

From a South Central L.A. flyer calling for a Black and Latino unity rally:

Los Angeles—In 1992, the Crips and Bloods in Watts made history by creating a Gang Truce. Inspired by the gang peace movement of 1974 and 1988, the truce had, and still has, national and international impacts. 1996 is the 4th Anniversary of the Los Angeles Gang Truce. The truce not only stopped the violence among the two largest gangs in Los Angeles, but also brought community members together. Together, we are building a dynamic, militant movement for social justice, jobs, housing and education.

Following the 1992 uprisings, which called attention to our community's problems, it's time to mobilize and rebuild L.A. according to our needs. In an attempt to rebuild L.A. we are calling for 10,000 African-American, Chicano, men, women, family and friends to join our rally.

The short-term purpose of the march and demonstration is to unite, encourage, and create a critical group of community members to actively engage in rebuilding our community and protest against the criminalization of our young men. This is a crucial problem since in the state of California alone, 40 in every 100 Chicano and Black young men are in jail, prison, or on probation.

This effort is a continuous one. We recognize that since the beginning of our existence in this country, African-American and Chicano people have suffered from dehumanizing conditions of racism, estrangement from society, massive unemployment, and a lack of real educational opportunities. Our communities, as well as other segments of society, are faced with the real possibility of living a sub-human existence, or even collective extinction, unless we begin to link our understanding of these issues to concrete action—NOW!

Our long-term objective is active community involvement and empowerment. Take part in the community's struggles! **Rally demonstration: Saturday, April 27 at Will Rogers Park—103rd and Central.** Time to be announced.

Professor Carson did concentrate on one revolution, the American revolution of 1776 that failed to end Black slavery. But Carson holds fast to its "egalitarian rhetoric" because it offers the possibility of a constitutional solution to inequalities, racism, ethnic fears and strife in the U.S., a country which he regards as being already objectively multicultural. Carson fears most that the constitutional or federal government solution to social problems is being threatened by today's anti-governmentism. He thinks "that the trajectory of change in the United States is toward a restrictive view of government as a protector of civil rights or as a counter force against predatory capitalism."

Carson has presented himself with a dilemma, as he thinks that there is a "rational" governmental solution to the present economic, racial and ethnic crises. At best the government can give relief and intervene as a mediator, but it can never resolve these social crises; they're caused not by a constitution or laws, but are rooted in the crisis of capitalist production itself. What is on the historic agenda today is not the revolution of 1776 but a new revolution to create a new human society.

More DCFS nightmares

Chicago—After reading last month's story, "Getting out from under horror of DCFS" [Illinois Dept. of Children and Family Services], I was shocked but not surprised. This type of situation is tragic, yet typical. It is just the kind of thing I witnessed as a social worker.

Child abuse and neglect are serious, complicated issues. Drug abuse, physical and sexual assaults, and abandonment are all valid reasons for removing children from homes. But with DCFS and the state, there are two other major factors in deciding who gets to keep their children and who doesn't: class and race.

Once a poor family is reported, they are up against several massive bureaucracies. Let me illustrate with a true story: A woman and her children had to flee an abusive husband and wound up homeless. According to DCFS she was "not providing adequate shelter." This was a "violation" and her children were taken away.

This woman was on AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children). Next came the welfare bureaucracy. They said, "You don't have your children, so we're cutting off your benefits." She was then without her children and cut off financially. This made her situation even more desperate. To get her children back she had to go to juvenile court. The court system said in essence, "You don't have adequate shelter or income so you can't have your children back."

No place: DCFS said no kids. No kids: Welfare said no AFDC. No money or place: The court said no kids. In a series of Catch 22's, she was punished for being poor.

Being poor made it that much easier for the state to control her and her children's lives. Like most poor families, hers probably couldn't afford a private attorney who could better represent their interests. More than likely they were appointed a public defender, who usually has 300 to 400 cases a year, and doesn't have much time to put into each one.

Juvenile court ends up looking like a production line at Ford. Bring in the raw materials, mostly poor Black children; process their cases in the court assembly line; and ship them out, their minds and bodies abused, like this young woman's.

Race is often the second deciding factor in who gets to keep their children and who doesn't. The young woman's parents in last month's story obviously needed counseling for alcoholism. Did the Chicago police or DCFS refer them for treatment? We can't tell from the story. But if they are typical of most Black families, they are not given counseling and help. They are given condemnation and punishment. The belief seems to be that these parents have committed a crime and are guilty even without a trial. The pervasive attitude among social workers is that "these (Black) people are dysfunctional." There are, of course, Blacks and whites who abuse their children. But when it comes to Black families, they are much more likely to be broken apart and/or not given the resources they need to get on their feet. And the situation will get worse with the "Personal Responsibility Act" which will cut back on subsidies for relatives who act as foster parents for children.

If you go to juvenile court in Chicago, most of the cases you see are of Black families. This is a result of the systematic racism in housing, jobs and education. But it is also the by-product of the racism in the police force that "interrogated" this young woman; the mostly white state's attorneys, public defenders and judges who make the decisions over Black folks' kids; the medical personnel who are almost always white who come up with clinical and psychiatric diagnoses; and unfortunately, a few Black social workers who have adopted some of the reactionary ideas circulating in this society.

The system doesn't provide enough jobs, adequate education, proper counseling for drug and alcohol abuse, therapy for abused children and so on. The system provides just enough for families to limp along not completely healed but not so little as to completely perish. For if the "underclass" were to be completely wiped out that would end all the middle-class jobs—lawyers, social workers, judges, cops, therapists—that thrive on the misery created by decaying American capitalism.

All of the material resources—education, counseling, therapy—needed by the families I described are already here under capitalism. The problem is that without a revolution, they will never get what they fully need to recover and thrive.

—Robert Reed

Black World

(continued from page 1)

long enough in get out and mean something useful and for real?"

This is not only the dilemma of the Black actor in white-controlled media with which Bambara indicts American culture, nor only a profound scripting of Cash's life; the philosophic significance of Bambara's critique extends beyond Black cultural dilemmas to the social disintegration of American civilization that they reflect. Which is why nothing could be farther from the truth than the liberal impression conveyed by C.D.B. Bryan in his review of Bambara's short story collection *Gorilla, My Love*: "Toni Cade Bambara tells me more about being black through her quiet, proud, silly, tender, hip, acute, loving stories than any amount of literary polemicalizing could hope to do."

Mary Helen Washington, who anthologized Bambara's work in several books, takes the exactly opposite view. Hazel's (the young Black protagonist of *Gorilla*) "rejection of the simplistic, religious message of the film ['The King of Kings'] is...conditioned by [her] family's philosophy of resistance," which also "allows Hazel to trust her own interpretation of reality." The film "is not so simple as it is stupid," Hazel finds. "Cause I realize that just anybody in my family is better than this god they always talkin about.... I can just see it now, Big Brood [Hazel's older brother] up there on the cross talkin about forgive them Daddy cause they don't know what they doin. And my Mama says Get on down from there you big fool, whatcha think this is; playtime?"

In the Black woman writer, this represents nothing less than the "indignant consciousness" that Hegel and Marx found so powerfully elaborated in Diderot's novel *Rameau's Nephew*. In 1869, when Marx sent a copy of *Rameau* to Engels, with excerpts from the account of Diderot's depiction of the "indignant consciousness" from Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*, it was out of Marx's appreciation of the revolutionary nature of literary satire.

Heard in this form of literary expression is "The mocking laughter at existence, at the confusion of the whole and at itself, [for it] is the disintegrated consciousness, aware of itself and expressing itself, and is at the same time the last audible echo of all this confusion.... It is the self-disintegrating nature of all relations and their conscious disintegration.... In this aspect...the indignant consciousness is aware of its own disintegration and by that knowledge has immediately transcended it." This is

the "philosophy of resistance" that Mary Helen Washington finds in the consciousness and character of the young Black girl that Bambara creates to issue her critique of religion and the adult world.

What makes the work of a writer like Bambara "the last audible echo of all this confusion" of our disintegrated social existence is not only that her characters constitute the conscious self-disintegration of the Black community's patriarchal relations. It is that, unlike other Black literary writers, Bambara was also a Black feminist who theorized the original contribution of Black feminism to Women's Liberation and Black Liberation.

She published the first anthology of Black feminist thought in 1970, *The Black Woman: An Anthology*. This collection of prose, poetry, fiction, and theory was like most early intellectual works from the Women's Liberation and Black Studies movements. But while its overtly political nature set it apart from today's academic Black feminist works, *The Black Woman* anthology carried all the contradictions and ideological baggage of the period.

However, what Bambara does in the preface to *Black Woman* with the meaning of "basic" is quite dialectical in capturing the disintegrating consciousness that Hegel pinpoints. She first makes it the criterion of liberation: "If we women are to get basic, then surely the first job is to find what liberation for ourselves means." Next she scathingly counterposes this liberatory concept of basic to its usage by psychiatrists interpreting the "basic" personality traits and behavior of women, by the commercial psychologists studying the "basic" consumer habits of women, by biologists theorizing about the "basic" instincts of women, and by biochemists who prop up the metaphysical sexism of the Freudian proposition that anatomy is destiny.

This indignant, or disintegrating, feminist consciousness did not stop at a critique of white male dominated society and thought, but extended to a critique of the unenforceable patriarchal order of the Black community that Black men nevertheless try to uphold. In her award-winning 1980 novel *The Salt Eaters*, Bambara gives the following satirical description of the hollow charisma and public appeal of the modern Black leader: "Some leader. He looked a bit like King, had a delivery similar to Malcolm's, dressed like Stokely, had glasses like Rap, but she'd never heard him say anything useful or offensive. But what a voice. And what a good press agent. And the people bought him. What a disaster. But what a voice."

The lives and work of Toni Cade Bambara and Rosalind Cash show us that if we are to move beyond the hollow voice of today's Black leaders and get basic about dismantling the master's house with ours, not his, tools, we need to re-think what the dialectics of liberation mean in the movement from consciousness, through culture, to philosophy.



Will Mexico's civil war become total?

(continued from page 1)

evicting peasants from land in several states, even right down the road from San Andres. They fly overhead in their helicopters, hold press conferences where they paint themselves as the victim...[T]hey're in the negotiations with the same attitude as their military detachments and their jails where they continue to hold supposed Zapatistas as political prisoners. It's one of the diverse forms of their low intensity warfare."

One of the government negotiators, Jorge del Valle, is an ex-leftist well versed in the language of rebellion. In the talks he has openly declared his intention is "to humble" the EZLN. From all appearances, however, it is the PRI government and its shaky ideological edifice that is being humbled. With every provocation in the talks the EZLN responds with a plainly worded, moving response that appears in the next day's newspapers. With every crime committed by the police, every assassination and rape, there are renewed efforts to fight back.

On March 9 the EZLN issued a communique to publicize the ongoing repression in the municipality of Tila, in northern Chiapas. The area is dominated by military camps, but this doesn't stop the bands of "white guards" (composed of ruling party thugs and landowners) of breaking into houses and beating up the inhabitants. The Army watches this, the national newspapers report it, and it continues. The EZLN communique states, in part: "These acts make it clear that the government is determined to continue its war against the people, despite its words of dialogue and negotiation."

Many leftists, especially outside Mexico, have been quick to denounce the talks with the government, "from which nothing has come and nothing will come." This ignores the fact that at every turn the rebels have been pushing them along, criticizing and exposing the tricks of the government. The first agreement states that the rights of indigenous peoples should be included in the Constitution, that it is necessary to widen their political representation, to guarantee their access to justice and education. These are just words, of course, and even changing the Constitution in Mexico doesn't mean much because the government violates it daily anyway.

But what is the first thing the EZLN wants to do after signing the papers? They demand to travel to the Legislative Palace in Mexico City to witness the conversion of the accords into law. To Zedillo, this smells of precisely the thing he fears most: seeing the civil war in the rural areas spread to the cities. The mere thought of hooded Zapatistas in the capital—imagine, walking right in without even a pistol in their hands!—provokes terror in the ruling class. Zedillo has said no, you cannot come here, "it is impossible to guarantee your security." (No doubt about that.) Still, they want to go.

SPECTER OF PEASANT-WORKER UNITY

Clearly, every move the rebels make is guided by the thought: what kind of solidarity can we foment between all sectors of the country's oppressed? We can see this even in the recent proposal of the EZLN to transform itself into the FZLN, or Zapatista Front for National Liberation. According to the IV Declaration from the Lacandon Jungle and recent communiqués, its members "will not seek either elected nor appointed posts in the government," since the democracy being fought for "must be something more than electoral democracy."

It is the specter of solidarity between a peasant rebellion and a (largely unemployed) working class that most haunts not only the Mexican government, but the U.S. too. Divisions between peasants and workers have always formed the Achilles heel of the Latin American revolutions. Since 1994 we have seen in Mexico a very new kind of indigenous peasant revolt, one that speaks

of women's rights, of a new concept of "leader," one that rejects not only the power of governments but the kind of power-grabbing the Third World revolutions have degenerated into as well.

It arose at a moment two years ago specifically to challenge the hegemony of the so-called neoliberal project, of "integrating" Mexico into the "free market reforms" of the world market. Given all of this, it ought to raise for us the question: haven't we been witnessing the appear-



ance of some of the very objective conditions necessary to go beyond the limitations of the unfinished Latin American revolutions? And what can we do to help move it ahead further?

When the EZLN-organized National Forum on Indigenous Rights was held in San Cristobal in January, President Zedillo felt the need to launch his own appeal to the nation's peasantry. He travelled to Veracruz where his party rounded up a thousand people to hear him. After the mariachis and the local officials had their say, Zedillo began to explain the depth of the ruling party's commitment to indigenous people, "a problem for us all." "We have the will and the instruments to attend to the demands and the necessities of the 'indigenas' in a sustained manner," he said. That was all the crowd needed to hear, as they began to file out of the stadium. By the time the police noticed the exodus, half the crowd had disappeared, and a few minutes later the order came down to lock the gates so the President of the Republic might at least have a small audience.

The fact that the current PRI government has so timidly tried to convince the masses of its "moral imperative" exposes the seriousness of the situation. The only sector of society with less confidence in the State is the State itself. It is tempting to say that the only confidence remaining is in the rule of might, as there undoubtedly exists in Mexico today an unprecedented reign of terror on the part of the Army and police.

Never have there been more assassinations, rapes, and beatings. The state of Guerrero is competing with Chiapas in its persecution of peasants, as over 100 have been killed there in the past year. Last June's massacre of 17 peasants on their way to an anti-government rally, 70 miles from Acapulco, has finally resulted in the resignation of Zedillo's friend Ruben Figueroa, the state governor. He is stepping down now only because a video was released in February showing the police planting weapons on the victims after they murdered them.

The increasing police repression is without a doubt one reason the Mexican working class, whether fully employed or otherwise, has found it difficult to develop a movement of its own. At the same time, there exists the double threat of losing your job if you organize for better conditions, a situation U.S. workers know too well. Consider the experience of Mexico City's bus drivers (the Ruta 100 company). When the system was privatized over a year ago more than 10,000 union jobs were lost, and today the workers who led the opposition to the move are still in jail. Now the Pemex (state oil monopoly) workers are fearing the worst as privatization plans of that industry go forward.

A year ago we travelled to Mexico City and reported in these pages that none of the workers we talked to had any hope of the economic crisis improving. Today the only thing that has changed in this regard is that the government is no longer trying to convince the workers of brighter days ahead. There has been a 50% drop in consumption in the past 12 months alone, and neither

Death in the Philippines

Ferdinand Reyes, 33, a Filipino human rights lawyer, activist, and journalist-publisher of the newspaper *Press Freedom*, was gunned down Feb. 12, inside his office-residence in Dipolog City, 440 miles south of Manila. He was known for his hard-hitting column, "Vision and Revision," and for his weekly radio newscast, "Direct to the Point," both crusading against human rights abuses and government corruption.

Reyes was the 53rd journalist killed in the Philippines since 1978. About 23 of those were from the southern Philippines. The funeral procession closed down the city with 8,000 mourners. One person who desperately wanted to be there was his mother, but due to U.S. immigration policies she was prevented from attending.

She is like millions of other immigrants who are either in the U.S. legally and have stayed past their visa expiration dates or are here illegally in the first place. They are really prisoners without voices because to speak out would mean a one-way ticket back to their point of origin. If you're lucky enough to find work you remain silent.

—Observer

industry nor the government is speculating on how the downward spiral can be stemmed.

This system, whether you call it state-capitalism, neoliberalism, or the world market, has no future. The ongoing rural rebellion has never deceived itself in this regard; it does not aim to check capitalism's decline but rather to deal it a deathblow, to open new perspectives for a very different future. Recently Mexico's Secretary of Commerce signed further GATT agreements to kill remaining subsidies on agrarian products. Two years ago the Zapatistas made it clear that such developments were precisely why they took up arms, for they represent their annihilation, a form of genocide. Should we now conclude that the revolt has not been successful, since it has not been possible to stem the militarization of the country nor sway the hand of those willing to allow foreign capital to determine the future?

SIGNS OF CHANGE

We would be smarter to consider how closely related are the sentiments of Mexico's urban poor—employed and unemployed—with the ideas expressed in the ongoing rural civil war. The working class is, on the whole, in retreat before the might of "restructured" state-capitalism. There are signs, however, that this may be changing. Sporadic and intense labor battles always seem to be present, but it is the kind of new thinking that comes from facing new conditions that can bring a new kind of movement about.

Recently, workers from the Ford plant in Puebla visited Chicago to meet workers there and talk about what they face in production since NAFTA went into effect. They spoke about robotics on the line causing speed-up, "Quality Circles" (team concept) where they are pushed into controlling absenteeism. They told of their daily form of protest, "working with less enthusiasm."

One of the workers said: "There's a new language in work relations. They want you to see the person standing next to you not as a comrade... They want to abolish our collectivity, to isolate us. That's what they fear most, so they want to make us feel alone."

Doesn't this sound like the same thinking that has come from the Zapatista revolt? At the closing of the National Indigenous Forum in January Adolfo Regino said, "When we have the opportunity to share our thoughts, what we carry within us after so many years of struggle, we breathe deeply and we are moved, because we are all mirrors of the realities of each other." These words are not abstractions, but rather come from the experience of rebelling against this new world order at a specific moment of its decline. As such, they have much to teach us.

Mexican workers picket GM

Detroit—A group of Mexican workers and their supporters demonstrated in front of the General Motors headquarters building here, March 22, carrying placards and banners protesting GM's closing of its assembly plant in Mexico City. GM is not just closing its Mexico City assembly plant where workers are paid \$12 a day, it is moving this work to another Mexican state where the pay is \$5 a day.

At a meeting held earlier at GM UAW Local Union 22, two laid-off workers from the Mexico City plant, Amada Guzman Frias and Ricardo Espinosa Roman, described the workers' opposition to the plant closing, the collusion of the Mexican government with GM's efforts to intimidate the opposition and GM's failure to live up to its contract provisions.

Roman, who had worked at the plant for 18 years, served on the local union executive committee but resigned when a majority of the committee failed to oppose the closing. He was fired a year ago as a "troublemaker" and now is organizing opposition to GM at home and abroad, exposing GM's contract and safety violations and appealing for working-class solidarity and support. Mexican law, Roman noted, is directly involved because it is supposed to guarantee that worker contracts are observed, and one glaring example of its failure to act involves severance pay provisions that are based on seniority and retroactivity. GM offered to pay only 20% of what the contract calls for, and neither the local union nor government has protected the workers' rights.

Frias said GM's "retraining" program proved to be a farce. She described a machine shop, supposed to prepare laid-off workers for other jobs, which used outmoded and obsolete machinery; a cosmetology course for women was derided as, "We were supposed to learn how to be beautiful so we could get a man and not have to work," and a small business course was simply laughed at since none of the laid-off and destitute workers could even imagine opening any kind of business.

Both Frias and Roman have been blacklisted and cannot find employment anywhere. Frias noted that of the plant's 1,800 workers, there were 100 women in production and that she had been among the first to work on the line when they made their breakthrough in 1988. Most of the women in production, like Frias, first started to work in the GM plant kitchen. Roman said he had also started in the kitchen.

There is increasing support from both students and intellectuals, Roman stated, pointing especially to the massive Mexico City demonstration on March 18, the anniversary of the 1938 oil nationalization, that took five hours to pass.

Aid to help the protesting Mexican workers can be sent to Sindicato de General Motors de Mexico, Lomas de Cartagena, Tultitlan 54900, Estado de Mexico; Fax: 915-881-2380.

—Andy Phillips

New Otani Hotel boycott

Los Angeles—Rank-and-file low-wage workers, mostly Latinos, and Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union Local 11 members are in the midst of a boycott campaign against the Japan-based non-union New Otani Hotel.

The international boycott was launched on Jan. 24 after a more than two-year union organizing effort. During that period management used many intimidation tactics including the firing of three Latina housekeeping workers in February 1995, the firing of over 20 security and firewatchers in June 1995, and sexual harassment of female workers. One of the workers fired for her effort to unionize the hotel was making \$7 an hour after 16 years of service, out of which she had to pay \$100/month for medical insurance.

Kajima Corp., a Japanese construction conglomerate, owns controlling interest in the hotel's parent company. Its past war crimes of enslaving and killing Chinese laborers during World War II have recently come to light.

A twice-weekly picket is maintained by workers, students and community activists, mostly Asians, as well as Local 11 staff members and president Maria Elena Durazo. According to union spokespersons, there have been some successes. Some groups have rescheduled gatherings to union hotels, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and Asian Pacific American Women Leadership Institute.

The courts recently canceled a previous order prohibiting union supporters from visiting the homes of hotel workers. President Durazo declared the ruling a victory for free speech. International endorsements of support for the boycott have come from around the world including Australia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, England, Egypt, Ghana, Israel, Japan, Mauritius, Norway, Spain and Zimbabwe.

—Boycott supporter

Editorial

GM strike shows resistance to 'economic anxiety'

As stories about the growing "economic anxiety" in the U.S. showed up in newspapers and on television in March, along came the 18-day strike at two General Motors plants in Dayton, Ohio, grabbing the attention of anyone dependent on a paycheck. At the same time, headlines and sound bites were filled with Patrick Buchanan trying to exploit labor's distrust of capitalist leaders.

The shutdown by 2,700 members of the United Auto Workers Local 696 who make brakes, brake parts and engine bearings for GM idled some 177,000 GM workers at 26 plants in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, and thousands of workers at other companies. This auto strike had the most far-reaching consequences of any in 25 years with \$500 million in lost production.

The strike was meant to stop GM from breaking a promise not to contract out work to suppliers like Bosch which pays well below the union wages and benefits of Local 696 members. But the result of the strike could hardly be called a victory, for GM will continue to buy parts from non-union suppliers. GM's hard line in March—and possibly in national contract bargaining this summer—joins efforts by other companies to cut costs by buying goods and services from non-union suppliers. This forces employees to work for the same substandard wages paid by those suppliers, or see their jobs eliminated altogether. This strategy is called "outsourcing," but it's just another name for runaway shops.

Idled GM workers in non-striking locals, expressed solidarity with the Local 696 members because outsourcing threatens all who earn decent wages. They are worried about the permanence of hard times and a bleak future for their children. One economist, Lawrence Mishel of the Economic Policy Institute, further captured what's eating at the country's workers in the face of layoffs, falling wages, and impoverishment of working families: "If everyone is afraid that the job they now have is the best job they can get, because if they lose it they go to a worse job, then no one...is able to put any pressure on the employer."

Defeats at Staley, Caterpillar and Bridgestone/Firestone remind us that the government and corporations have attempted to take away the strike as a weapon. And although the GM shutdown reminded workers of the power of a strike, the settlement also shows that striking alone can't solve the problem of "outsourcing" and economic insecurity. The job of organizing the unorganized must be done.

WHO'S LISTENING?

New AFL-CIO President John Sweeney last fall committed \$20 million of federation funds to do just that. How the money is now being spent, though, raises questions as to whether he's substituting a hollow program for real organizing. He wants to satisfy the militant new members entering the union, many of them immigrants, Blacks, and women in service industries. Yet a program that brings new blood and new ideas to locals and work sites may not be controllable.

Thus, for the coming "Union Summer," student youth and even union members are to be recruited for all too brief three-week assignments where union organizing is taking place, then sent home. Such a tactic can hardly summon the creativity of young people who identify with unions, or that of the union members who will participate. Furthermore, a union organizer in Mississippi, which "Union Summer" is supposed to target, complained, "No one has asked us anything about what we think or told us what the plans are."

On the other hand, whether it's organizing or fighting givebacks, the rank and file knows what to do. The Mississippi organizer explained, "We are involved in organizing all the time in catfish and poultry plants, and we have a program where union rank-and-file workers take a leave from the plant to organize non-union plants. We also believe in building up an in-plant committee in places where we are organizing. Many times those are the workers who started the uprising anyway."

In the pivotal New York building cleaners strike by SEIU Local 32B-32J, which Sweeney once headed, local members got together to stop service deliveries and close offices. However, union officials stepped in to stifle their efforts, and the strike, against two-tier wages, failed.

When asked about "Union Summer," a Chicago building cleaner in SEIU laughed, "Hell, you already have non-union people working in organized buildings! They get paid three dollars an hour less than union people, and Local 25 ignores it. They should be in the union."

VYING FOR LABOR'S ALLEGIANCE

At the same time more and more workers distrust the labor bureaucrats and weigh what to do about a system that is broken beyond repair, the bourgeois politicians are trying to convince them reformism is possible, with rhetoric about equality in the Republican Flat Tax and about a safety net in Bill Clinton's health care budget.

However, the most dangerous use of ideology in order to sidle up to workers belongs to Patrick Buchanan. He

openly supported the GM strikers and marched in the Chicago South Side St. Patrick's Day parade in an all-white contingent of crane operators and other construction skilled unionists. His denunciation of foreign trade agreements (tinged with jingoism) has been as effective as organized labor's anti-NAFTA efforts. So strong have been Buchanan's denunciations of corporate America that John Sweeney spoke up to condemn Buchanan's racism and anti-semitism—and to reassert the AFL-CIO's own claim to speak for labor.

But while many along the St. Patrick's Day parade route cheered Buchanan, many cursed him out and his retrograde views on immigrants, Blacks, gays, and women. A veritable battle of ideas, and fists, took place that day. That kind of struggle—and the self-organization, actions, and ideas about stopping outsourcing and organizing the unorganized—has the potential not only to forge an alternative to Buchanan's manipulations and Sweeney's substitutionism, but a way out of capitalism's permanent economic crises.

Arab-Israeli time of terror

Tel Aviv, Israel—Feb. 24 was a clear and sunny weekend day, also on the political scene. The Israeli general elections had been set for May 29. In all opinion polls, Prime Minister Shimon Peres kept a strong and steady lead over Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu; his victory seemed a foregone conclusion. Israeli-Palestinian relations seemed to be moving smoothly along, following Yasser Arafat's success in the Palestinian elections. The way seemed clear to further stages: revocation of the Palestinian Covenant, an outdated symbol of Palestinian intransigence; Israeli withdrawal from Hebron, the only major West Bank city still under occupation.

Under the calm surface, however, a fuse was burning, lit with the assassination of senior Hamas member Yihya Ayash by Israeli undercover agents at Gaza on Jan. 5. In giving them the go-ahead to kill Ayash, Rabin's successor Shimon Peres made one of the worst blunders of his long career. The Ayash assassination shattered the de facto ceasefire which Hamas had maintained since August 1995. It tipped the balance inside Hamas against the relatively pragmatic internal leadership, which aims to become a political party. In the aftermath the lead among the radical Muslims was seized by the exiled leadership which seeks to continue at all costs and by all means the struggle against Israel.

Arafat tried to stem the tide, holding extensive negotiations with the Hamas leadership to stop them from taking revenge against Israel which, he knew would entail an Israeli crackdown. But a group of Hamas militants was already preparing for the series of suicide attacks. Jan. 25, second anniversary of the massacre perpetrated in Hebron by the fanatic settler Baruch Goldstein, was the date selected by Goldstein's Palestinian equivalents to begin their campaign.

POLLS TAKEN in the days following the first attack indicated that Peres lost most of his lead. He now seemed to run almost neck-and-neck with Netanyahu. Meanwhile, the government took the almost automatic step of imposing a closure on the Palestinian territories, supposedly in order to prevent the entry of further bombers, and incidentally depriving tens of thousands of workers of their livelihood. For its part, the Hamas leadership released a statement calling for a ceasefire with Israel, and setting March 8 as a deadline for Israeli response, until which date no further action would be taken. The offer was officially rejected by the Peres government—yet it was taken quite seriously by several mainstream politicians and commentators.

However, the band of bombers seemed bent on discrediting their own movement's leadership and showing that, in spite of the closure and of all security precautions they could strike again, on the same hour of the same day in the week, on the same Jerusalem bus line.

(It was Line 18, serving mainly the most impoverished of the Jerusalem slums.)

ON THE NIGHT of the second bombing, the cabinet held an emergency meeting in an atmosphere of panic magnified by the exaggerated media coverage of the shouting mobs. Some ministers actually proposed reconquering all the towns recently handed over to the Palestinians which would have meant a total confrontation with the Palestinians and a bloodbath of staggering proportions.

The cabinet's actual decisions were draconian enough: a virtual siege of the Palestinian self-governing territories; an effective brutal reconquest of the West Bank villages, left in the Oslo-2 agreement as an ambiguous no-man's-land between the Israeli and Palestinian jurisdictions; and a campaign of house demolitions and arrests of the suicide bombers' family members.

Activists gathered in front of Peres' home in north Tel Aviv to protect it from the mobs and urge the Prime Minister to preserve what was left of the peace process. An increasing number of peace demonstrators, organized by a variety of groups from the center to the left of the political spectrum, took to the streets of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem to express their determination not to let the chance for peace be snatched away.

There was also an enormous mobilization by Israel's Arab citizens, with "Yes to Peace, No to Terrorism" demonstrations and vigils taking place at practically every significant Arab town in Israel and at many of the smaller villages, supported by all parts of the Arab political spectrum. On the other side of the border, there were for the first time big peace rallies in the Gaza and at several of the West Bank cities, in spite of their difficult situation under virtual siege by the Israeli army. There seemed to be quite a genuine revulsion against the suicide bombers at the Palestinian grassroots though it remains to be seen whether that would deter the bombers, now seen to be a small fanatical breakaway group, oblivious even to Hamas' own political leadership.

For the more radical of us, the mobilization around Peres and against the right-wing onslaught left little space for confronting Peres from the other direction. Only a few isolated placards in the demonstrations took up the collective punishments and gross human rights violations in the Palestinian territories which the army's brutal actions in the past few days have shown to be still very much under occupation.

The peace which seems to be taking shape will be a cold and harsh thing, a far cry from the open symbiosis and open borders which we always dreamed about. Yet if it will provide an end to violence and a time for both peoples to heal their wounds, it may soften in time.

—Adam Keller



Farm workers fight agribusiness



Chicago—What I most want people to hear about now is what just happened with the Quincy Mushroom workers in Quincy, Fla., near Tallahassee. They picketed during lunch March 14, and the grower called for the police. It became really violent. One hundred fifty of the farmworkers were fired and 40 were arrested for no justification but the picket line.

It all started in late October when the Quincy Mushroom workers heard that the UFW (United Farm Workers) was coming to organize in Florida. On their own, with no organizers, they went on strike. Then they called UFW and said we need you. They went on strike because of human rights as well as wages. One man had an accident with pesticides — they went into his eyes. The supervisor, instead of sending him to a clinic, said that if there was another accident, he would fire him.

The workers are Mexicans and African Americans. A lot of women and young teenagers work in the mushroom plant. Many have developed fungus disease because they have to work in wet conditions with no protection other than their own shoes. Chemicals are often spread while workers are there.

Many women state that there is a lot of harassment because supervisors assume these women are undocumented, and docile and shy. A lot of women are afraid to speak out, but others express very clearly what the situation is. One woman cut her hand and went to the office. The supervisor, instead of sending her to the nurse, started to touch her. She told him to stop and he responded that she could get fired. This was one of the

women who called the union.

In December the Quincy Mushroom owners met with UFW but decided not to negotiate for union recognition. Quincy Farms gave a small increase in wages, so farmworkers returned to work. But they were organizing to sign cards for union recognition. We had started a corporate campaign, to have supporters buy shares from Sylvan Inc., the company that owns Quincy Mushrooms. They sign proxies to farmworkers, so for the May board meeting, farmworkers can ask them to negotiate for a union contract. Meanwhile, workers had returned to work and there were many abuses, so they organized this picket.

Clinton just signed into law a bill call HR2. It makes it legal for growers to bring farmworkers from Mexico. These farmworkers will have a special permit as a way of controlling them. Agribusiness is putting a hand into this issue of immigration.

The activity of dividing people is so prevalent right now. The farmworker unions have been very involved in fighting the anti-immigration initiatives that have started in Florida, Oregon, and California, especially. In Florida, there are five anti-immigrant initiatives. Our staff is part of a coalition, Fair for All Florida. Farmworker Association of Florida and FLOC (Farm Labor Organizing Committee) are on the steering committee. They are doing a lot to bring consciousness of the importance of voting against these initiatives.

—Veronica Meneses

National Farmworker Ministry

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Youth Marx vs. capitalist culture industry

[This month I am turning over the youth column to Lawrence W., an undergraduate at Northern Illinois University—Maya Jhansi]

Throughout history, America has been dubbed the land of opportunity. The American dream is based on the self-made man, starting with nothing and creating a financial empire of unlimited growth. Deeply rooted in the American dream lies capitalism. Unfortunately, the American dream of prosperity does not happen for everyone. In Marx's depiction of reality the American dream is just that...a dream.

Marx wanted to go beyond the limits of a given society. According to Plato, most people view the world as if in a darkened cave. Only when we venture outside of this dark womb can we see the world as it actually is. It is easier to describe the existing world by moving beyond our present situation to encompass new reformist ideas. Marx's views continue the cave allegory tradition. He urged the world to develop new ways to look at itself.

To Marx, it is the unique characteristic of the human species to be creative. It is what unites us and makes us different from other species which rely solely on instinctual drives. A man relates to himself as a universal and, therefore, a free being. In the factory we are denied this freedom of expression and alienated from our essence. We are no longer individuals, no longer intelligent, no longer human, but nameless, faceless creatures acting as the extension of the industrial machine. We become alienated from ourselves.

The relationship between the consumer and laborer is hidden within capitalism's elaborate social networks. We seldom see the factory worker who assembles the products we purchase in the store (for example, our shoes or furniture). Though these products obviously required manual production from someone, our communication takes place with the products of labor.

In this sense the life essence that we receive comes from the products themselves, not the creators of the

products. It is as if the inanimate objects are living and the humans that produce them are the objects. According to Marx this "fetishism of commodities" creates "material relations between persons and social relations between things." Marx believed that after capitalism ends, the veil of fetishism would be stripped away. Production would become the work of freely associated men.

Today, television has become our culture's icon. TV shows and advertising show the riches of the world and entice viewers to "go out there and get it." According to Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, the ruling class creates our ideology and the culture industry incorporates the values of the upper class and transmits them to the masses: "Under a monopoly, all mass culture is iden-



Deadbeat uncle.

tical... Movies and radio need no longer pretend to be art. The truth that they are just business is made into an ideology in order to justify the rubbish they deliberately produce" (The Dialectic of Enlightenment p. 121).

The culture industry's motivation is to uphold the pre-existing corporate forces which perpetuate its own existence. The quality of the product is sacrificed in order to appeal to a broader audience. In so doing the artist must decide between commercial success or individualistic expression. The culture industry is obedient to the norms of the social hierarchy.

Consumers are led to believe that we get what we want, although we have no say in what the culture industry produces. We act as objects, not subjects. We are passive, silent participants in a unilinear relationship which conveys the illusion of individuality, while (in fact) maintaining the status quo. We are manipulated into believing we are free thinking individuals.

Although in Marx's day the revolutionary force was the worker, as the times change, so does the focus of the revolutionary. Today, revolutionary groups might include young intellectuals, the women's movement, the minority rights movement, and environmental organizations. Though we would like to think of ourselves as free thinking individuals, much of what we believe is the result of morals and behavioral guidelines. Our culture is so centered on material possessions that capitalism is accepted as the best form of economic maturity.

Once the capitalist lifestyle becomes part of our way of thinking, it is difficult to look beyond the immediate to a time where life is not governed by the almighty dollar. We run the risk of committing the naturalistic fallacy: that the way that things are is the way that things should be. In order to escape the exploitive relationships our society accepts as normal business relations, a new system would need to be uprooted the current one. As Dunayevskaya said, "The creation of a new society remains the human endeavor."

Campus rallies to save affirmative action

Berkeley, Cal.—Over 1,500 students, joined by faculty and staff, celebrated March 14 as National Day of Action for Affirmative Action on the UC Berkeley campus. The noon rally and march was followed by a concert in the evening. Among the many speakers were members of the Theological School, who said "The religious right is wrong, the religious left is right," faculty who refused to abandon affirmative action, and staff who stressed how important affirmative action has been not just as means to be fairer to women and minorities, but in helping to teach the primarily white students and staff what racism is.

Several lessons were learned from last October's "day of action." One is that national mobilization really can happen. We heard from dozens of other campuses where events were taking place or were planned. Another was that we need more than one day of activity. We need to make it a sustained effort. Many vowed to organize against the California Civil "Wrongs" Initiative which would prohibit use of affirmative action in the whole state of California and which will be on the ballot in November. We are starting publication of an affirmative action journal. The Berkeley Staff Coalition for Affirmative Action is planning other forums for the spring and into summer.

The UC regents have not had a quiet meeting since their decision to ban affirmative action. Their every meeting has been disrupted by angry students. At the last one, on March 14, we handed the very silent regents a petition from around 1,200 UCB staff who called on the regents to reverse their decision. When there was no response, others disrupted their meeting to the point that the regents had to adjourn early. The continuous opposition to the regents' decision made regent Ward Connerly back down from his further attack on UC's outreach programs.

—Urszula Wislanka

Free Andre Ester!

Chicago—My son, Andre Ester, has been in the Department of Corrections at 26th and California, charged with a murder, waiting to go to trial. It has been almost two years since he has been incarcerated there.

All of this happened June 19, 1994, when I answered my door to two detectives who indicated that they wanted to speak with my son. They told me they were just going to take him down for questioning. One of the detectives asked how old Andre was; I said 17. He said, "Well he's considered grown anyway. But don't worry, he'll be home in a couple of hours." They had no warrant to get my son, and they refused me the right to escort my son to the police station, or even meet them there. This happened at 5:45 in the morning.

From the time they picked him up until 3:30 that afternoon, I didn't know why they had my son. So I called and the detective indicated I needed to call back in a couple of hours; so I called back around 5:30. This time I was told, "Miss Ester, we're holding your son. You can appear at 26th and California, Branch 66, tomorrow morning and you can find out why we have your son."

When I appeared at 26th and California at 9 a.m. and heard the charges against my son (I had to wait for hours), I could not believe it was murder. A murder? No, My thought was something is wrong. Why couldn't the detectives have told me that when they came to my house?

I understand that Andre had requested several times to call home and even to have a lawyer. He was told that if he didn't cooperate that he could not call. The detectives had told him, "Man, go on and just sign this statement so you can go home. Don't you want to see your mother? Don't you want to go home?" And my son signed that statement, not because he did it, but because he believed them.

In the meantime, what I have done is pretty much form a group, trying to substantiate the facts of my son's case. I started getting police reports. I have actual witness statements and affidavits from people who can substantiate that my son was with me when the murder happened.

If someone just took the time and went through the discovery data, they would see exactly what I'm saying, but I was told that, being a mother or a parent, I'm not allowed to say anything to the judge. Why should my son have to spend two years incarcerated and go through a trial when we have evidence to show he is not guilty?

In speaking in different places, every time someone always comes up and says, "My story is the same as yours," or "When I listened to your story, I thought I was listening to my own." I know that I have talked to several people like that. You can't open your door to the law enforcement people and not feel you are going to be railroaded. To support everyone who must fight this, that's why groups out there like mine are forming, or Mothers Reclaiming Our Children and the LA 4+ Committee.

If I have to take it to the people and let the people be the decision-makers, then that's what I'm going to do. I have met so many people now who are fighting for the same cause. It's not just Black. It's white. It's Hispanic. It's Asian. We're the majority being locked up in these prisons, so Black and Hispanic need to get involved. We need to start being heard ourselves. We need to start organizing our communities. WE need to start doing something.

—Susan Ester

For donations and other information, contact the Andre Ester Defense Fund, P.O. Box 436925, Chicago, IL 60643 - 6925. Telephone: (312) 298-0055.

Eco immigrant-bashing

Chicago—Beware the toxic waste of racism spewing from this presidential campaign season! The environmental movement itself is in danger from the poisonous immigrant-bashing, where Buchanan is the loudest but is copied by all the rest. The danger is not that the bashers are the same ones who bash environmentalists—or, like Clinton, hulk them while helping Congress undo protective laws. It is the attitude to immigrants that is one of the divisive weak points of the movement.

The main point of immigrant-bashing is to use scapegoats to divert attention from the role of the capitalist system in driving down the quality of life while undermining any sense of economic security. Shockingly, a large part of the ecology movement is drawn to this type of politics. The reason is not only the whiteness of the mainstream movement, but its acceptance of capitalist ideology in its view of the causes of pollution.

The environmentalist argument is that Third World immigrants greatly increase their impact on the environment just by moving from a poor country to the U.S. Why? Because the average energy consumption, carbon dioxide production, waste production, and so on per person is ten times or more higher in the U.S. than in Mexico, India, Brazil.

A little knowledge of the living conditions of many immigrants is enough to show that their lifestyles cannot be assumed to be "average." But more telling is the assumption that pollution is directly related to the size of the population. This is "scientifically" formulated in Paul Ehrlich's (author of The Population Bomb) equation: amount of pollution equals the number of people times the level of technology per person times the polluting effect per unit of technology.

To tie pollution to the number of people reduces all economic activity to consumption. But people do not consume crude oil and uranium ore. Immigrant families do not produce toxic waste. These are inputs and outputs of the process of production. As an example, less than 2% of solid waste is municipal waste. The rest comes from factories, mines, the military, utilities, cement kilns.

In other words, the main determinant of pollution is not individual consumption but capital accumulation. The reason this is so often overlooked is that the activity of capital is assumed to be the natural and necessary form of human activity.

As a result, activists put too much stress on getting people to consume less. They hold that all economic activity—and therefore all its environmental impact—is just the end result of consumer demand. This illusion, together with the racism persisting in the movement, has landed some groups in bed with right-wingers who have their own racist reasons to agitate for keeping out the Third World poor, thwarting efforts to understand why the mass of capital keeps growing and growing out of all proportion to consumption.

The opposite of capitalism's race to destruction is not to slow down consumption but to get off the treacherous track of production for its own sake. Only a fundamental social transformation can accomplish that.

—Franklin Dmitryev

Correction: The article "The Tragedy of Nikolai Bukharin" in the March N&L contained the sentence: "Bukharin's rejection of this non-capitalist revolutionary dimension Lenin called 'socialist economism.'" The sentence, which was not written by the author, was added inadvertently.

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

On March 23, Taiwan's President Lee Teng-hui won re-election by a landslide. While the overtly pro-independence party won only 21% of the vote, the vote as a whole showed that pro-independence sentiment on the island has not been weakened by military threats from the mainland Chinese government in Beijing.

In the weeks preceding the election, China conducted a series of intimidating military exercises in the 200-mile Taiwan straits separating the island from the mainland. Missile tests less than 50 miles from Taiwan's main port city amounted to a de facto naval blockade.

The U.S., long allied with Taiwan, although less so since relations with Beijing were normalized in the 1970s, soon responded by sending two giant nuclear-armed aircraft carriers into the area. Bellicose statements of a type not seen in years were issued by U.S. and Chinese authorities.

U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry bragged publicly that "America has the best damn navy in the world," and could pass through the straits should it be ordered to do so, while an editorial in a pro-Beijing Hong Kong newspaper threatened: "With a concentrated fire of

guided missiles the Peoples Liberation Army can bury an enemy intruder in a sea of fire."

Why has the issue of Taiwan, which has not been ruled from the mainland since Nationalist Chinese forces took refuge there in the wake of the Communist Revolution of 1949, suddenly become a focus of confrontation in 1996? This is not 1958, when the Taiwan straits became a point of confrontation between China and Russia on the one hand, and a U.S. government threatening to use nuclear weapons to defend Taiwan.

Until 1987, Taiwan was as totalitarian as mainland China, with a single party state led by remnants of the

pre-Communist mainland Nationalist regime ruling over a population that was 80% Taiwanese though Chinese in origin. Mandarin Chinese was the official language and Taiwanese political activists were jailed and even murdered. Many also remembered 1947, when the government massacred over 20,000 to crush a pro-independence uprising shortly after Japan's defeat in World War II returned the island to Chinese rule for the first time since 1895.

But ever since 1989, when the Tiananmen massacre crushed China's democratic movement, the movement for democracy and independence in Taiwan has gained strength. By the 1990s, the pro-independence and once illegal Democratic Progressive Party began to receive a large share of the vote, winning the mayoralty of Taipei, the capital, in 1994. Today, Taiwan is a functioning bourgeois democracy with a rapidly growing capitalist economy. President Lee, himself a native Taiwanese, knew he could win re-election only if he too courted independence sentiment.

These developments are a grave threat to the totalitarian state-capitalist regime on the mainland, which in addition to worrying about the example of greater democracy in Taiwan, has also reiterated its promise to go to war immediately should Taiwan declare independence.

In addition, the military, always a greater factor in Chinese Communism, may be maneuvering for the post-Deng Xiaoping succession. Its saber-rattling has certainly played to nationalist resentment over centuries of Western and Japanese imperialist inroads into China.

In recent years, China has grown into an economic giant and a possible emerging superpower. Contrary to those who have suggested that market capitalism would replace military conflict with economic competition, it has been flexing its muscles throughout the region. It is poised to take over Hong Kong in 1997, even though this will be a net economic loss in the short run.

Serb fires in Bosnia

During the past few weeks, the Bosnian Serb forces have turned their fascistic notion of "ethnic cleansing" on those Serbs in the suburbs of Sarajevo who did not share completely their racist ideology. In March, these suburbs, which in 1992 had been "cleansed" of Muslims and Croats, were turned back to the multiethnic Bosnian government as part of the Dayton accords.

During the transition period, the Serbian fascists stopped at nothing—including setting fires in inhabited buildings—in their efforts to force all Serbs to leave the area rather than live under the Bosnian government. NATO once again cooperated with ethnic cleansing by standing by and doing nothing. In one especially ludicrous case, Italian "peacekeepers" arrested a few of the arsonists, but then, following NATO rules, turned them over to the designated civilian authorities, the Bosnian Serb police, who promptly released them!

Croat chauvinists have also been fighting tooth and nail for a segregated society. In Mostar in 1993, Croat militias drove all Muslims out of the western part of the city, and then even destroyed an architectural wonder, the Turkish-built bridge over the Neretva River which had joined the two parts of the city for centuries. A few weeks ago, some very brave Muslim civilians tried to cross into the "Croat" side of the city, now that Mostar is part of the U.S.-brokered Muslim-Croat federation. In broad daylight, as UN police watched and did nothing, an armed gang of Croat skinheads, one of whom wore a Hitler mask and a swastika, drove the Muslims back into the eastern part of the city. Those same gangs intimidate any Croats who favor reunification of the city.

Former Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic has finally broken openly with the more religious-oriented politics of Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic. Silajdzic plans to build a multiethnic political party. With regard to the specter of a narrow, Islam-based nationalism, he declared: "It's like a sickness. I want to fight this sickness with the view that Bosnia must remain one country based on respect for otherness."

Bangladesh protest



Students stormed police headquarters in Dhaka, Bangladesh, March 14, to protest the deaths of 34 people at the hands of police, while a general strike reached four days in an attempt to oust Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

South Korea fraud trials

The unprecedented trials of two former South Korean military dictators—Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo—opened in March. They are charged with financial corruption and more importantly, with staging the 1979 coup and the bloody repression in May 1980 of the liberation uprising in Kwangju.

Chun led the 1979 coup and took over as dictator-president from 1980-88. Roh had a "lesser" role in the coup, but later served as "president" after repressing any opposition, from 1988-93. Roh is charged with taking in over \$300 million in bribes during his reign.

The Chun-Roh regime had the full backing of the Reagan administration for the slaughter in Kwangju of those, especially youth, who rose up against the Chun coup. Chun and Roh presided over a decade of explosive state-capitalist growth in South Korea, and their legal indictment is one manifestation of the opposition, especially among workers, to the political-military-business alliance which constitutes state-capitalism.

Australia moves right

The March 2 elections were a landslide victory for a conservative coalition comprising the Liberal and National Parties, as the Labor Party was ousted after 13 years in power in Australia. The new Prime Minister, John Howard, immediately put a rabidly anti-union politician, Peter Reith, in charge of labor relations. The conservatives plan a series of anti-worker "reforms" of the labor laws. They also opposed the Labor government's slight turn to multiculturalism and toward Asia, and intend a renewed emphasis on Australia's ties to Britain.

But on one central point, the conservatives will simply continue and deepen policies already pioneered by labor: austerity and "free market" economics. This explains in no small way why, with unemployment at 8%, thousands of workers refused to vote for Labor this time around.

Socialist loss in Spain

It was no surprise that the Socialist Party of Spain (PSOE) was voted out in March, after 13 years in power. PSOE Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez was defeated by crises ranging from unemployment—at 22%, the highest in Europe—to renewed violence in the Basque independence movement.

Gonzalez and PSOE were voted into power in December 1982. The victory of social democracy then, seven years after the death of dictator Francisco Franco, showed a deeper spirit which had not been quenched after 35 years of Franco's outright fascist repression, which dated back to the defeat of revolution within the Spanish Civil War.

Despite his "personal" popularity, Gonzalez' policies to integrate Spain into "free market capitalism" via the European Union removed him from his initial base of support. Together with a growing docket of cases of corruption among his officials, social democracy showed its bankruptcy in the 1990s.

Jose Maria Anzar's rightist Popular Party (PP) won the election but not a governing majority. The PP emerged, by name change, from the Popular Alliance established by former Franco minister Manuel Franga after the dictator's death. Anzar succeeded narrowly in winning this time, after past years of defeat, by supposedly driving Franco's shadow into the background, and instead appealing to the youth vote.

At least a quarter of Spain's electorate grew up with no direct memory of fascism under Franco. Among youth 20-25 years old, the unemployment rate is a staggering 42%. Anzar, a former tax collector, has promised a reduction in the term of obligatory military service and an increase in jobs for youth. He is now dealing to win a parliamentary majority.

Among the final blows to PSOE rule were revelations that high ranking government officials carried out a clandestine "dirty war" in the 1980s against Basque separatists in ETA (the nationalist paramilitary organization) hiding in France. Not unlike the situation in Ireland, the historic movement for independence in the Basque Country is an issue which Anzar—and every Madrid ruler—must address. Anzar has railed against ETA, but the national question within Spain, including also Catalonia and Galicia as well as other regions, is not reducible to politics alone.

In February, a huge march in Madrid of from 500,000 up to a million people was held to protest two assassinations carried out by Basque separatists. On the eve of elections, Gonzalez and Anzar both marched. But many who came took up the chant "Basques yes, ETA no!"

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958), *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 *Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Support women at Mitsubishi!



by B. Ann Lastelle

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on April 9 filed charges against Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing of America in Normal, Ill., for engaging in "a pattern and practice of discrimination against a class of female employees" by "creating a hostile and abusive work environment based on unwelcome verbal and physical sexual conduct, including sexual graffiti, sexually derogatory and explicit comments and innuendo, and unwanted groping, grabbing, and touching." Of 4,000 workers at the plant, 800 are women. The company denies the charges and has launched a battle to defend itself.

Mitsubishi is located in central Illinois, the scene of fierce struggles in the last four years against Bridge-stone/Firestone, Caterpillar and A.E. Staley, all of which were defeated. The company undoubtedly is emboldened by those defeats; the workers are discouraged about the prospects for fighting corporate power.

Mitsubishi gave employees a choice on April 22. For their day's pay they could either come to work or ride to Chicago on buses chartered by the company (with lunch provided by the company) to protest at the district EEOC office. This pro-company demonstration of 3,000 workers was a new low for the labor movement. It is not, however, the only recent instance of a corporation sponsoring pro-company employees' actions against dissident workers. Caterpillar is providing financial support for scabs who have sued the United Auto Workers union for abuse and torment during the strike.

Mitsubishi is a UAW shop. Where, one might ask, is the union? While International officials decried (from

(continued on page 2)

Black World

Whither Liberia?



by Lou Turner

The outbreak of factional violence in Liberia over the Easter weekend has once again plunged that fractured nation into a new, more vicious round of factional fighting. Sparked this time by the government's attempt to arrest Gen. Roosevelt Johnson, leader of one of the four factions that had been pressed into a volatile alliance under Liberia's strong-man Charles Taylor, Johnson's forces went berserk in the downtown area of the Liberian capital of Monrovia. Thousands fled for safety into the U.S. embassy.

Nearly a month after the outbreak of hostilities, the U.S. embassy in Monrovia, with the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs George Moose headquartered there, came under attack on April 30 by Johnson's forces. With several thousand U.S. Marines aboard ships offshore, the unusual presence of a State Department official of Moose's rank in Monrovia raises questions about U.S. military intentions.

The arrest order for Johnson was expedited because his supporters had killed 17 soldiers from the West African peacekeeping force ECOMOG, along with Liberian civilians, in December. The West African forces had entered the country six years ago to disengage the warring factions, and were just beginning to carry out the Abuja Peace Accords of August 1995, which called for the disarming of the factions, when they were fired upon by Johnson loyalists.

In the present fighting ECOMOG forces have maintained their neutrality and stood aside as Monrovia once again became a war zone, while U.S. helicopter gunships evacuated U.S. nationals to Freetown, Sierra Leone. Writing for *West Africa* (April 15-21, 1996), Maxwell Nwaboso observed that "As the helicopter gunships homed in to ferry out waiting refugees, snipers went to work in a manner reminiscent of what happened not so long ago in Bosnia-Herzegovina."

Throughout much of African commentary on Liberia, analysis like Lindsay Barrett have compared the Liberia crisis to that in Bosnia, and contrasted the U.S.'s response to the two conflagrations. The well over 200,000 Liberian lives lost in six years of fighting, the mass refugee problems created, and the impact on the conflict in

(continued on page 8)

New voices of opposition to prison warehousing of the poor

by Gerard Emmett

"Prison is a slaughterhouse with dollar signs in return for destroyed lives."

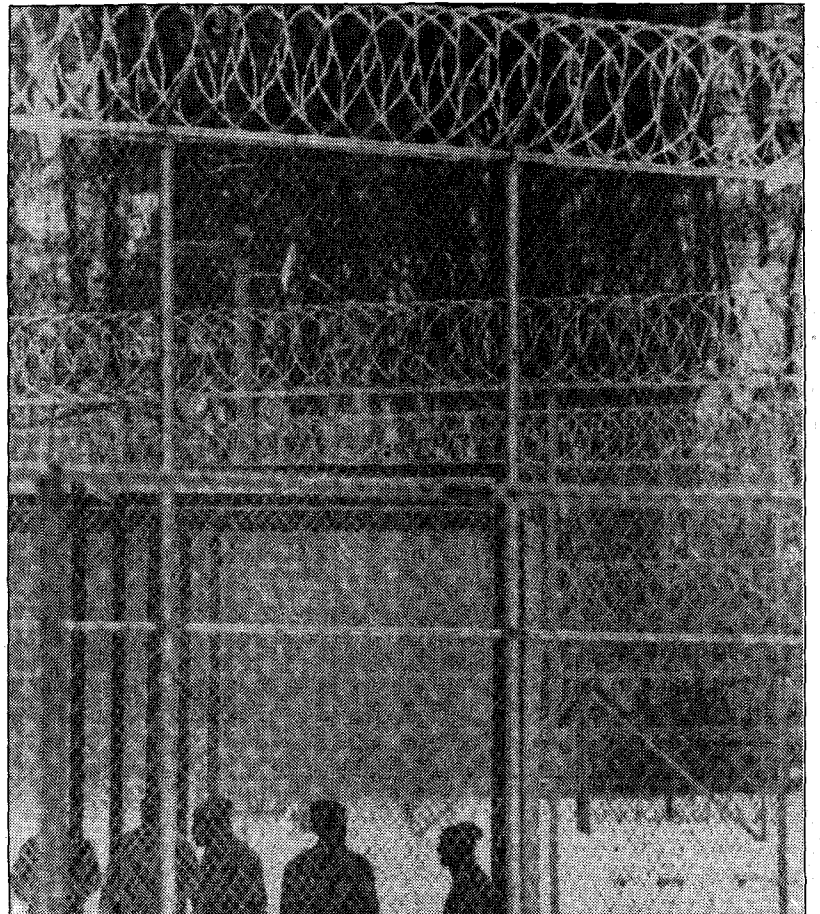
—Arizona woman prisoner

Four years ago, the Los Angeles Rebellion exploded upon the national consciousness as the largest urban insurrection in U.S. history, sparked by the racist obliviousness of a white Simi Valley jury. The specter of this rebellion, initiated by Blacks and joined by large numbers of Latinos and some whites, has driven the racist powers that be to a frenzied reaction ever since.

The videotaped brutal beatings by police of a Black woman motorist in North Carolina and, a continent away, the police beating of Mexican immigrants in California—both so reminiscent of the Rodney King beating—provide a proper frame for viewing what America has become for the poor and non-white. Recent incidents in Chicago have included the cold-blooded shooting of Joseph Gould, a homeless Black man who had offered to wash the car window of an off-duty police officer; the beating to death by police of Jorge Guillen, a mentally disturbed Honduran immigrant whose family had called on them to take him to the hospital; and the police execution of Eric Smith, a deaf Black man, while his family members looked on in helpless horror.

The attack on Latinos, particularly immigrants, has also now become more intense nationwide as the Republican Congress is contemplating new anti-immigrant legislation that would not only rescue the "ethnic cleansing" measures of California's racist Proposition 187, but extend them nationwide. President Clinton's election year response to this is simply to try to compete with the Republicans in appearing to be tougher on so-called "illegals." Raids by his Immigration and Naturalization Service across the country recently rounded up over a thousand immigrants.

The burgeoning prison system is the centerpiece of these measures of population control and provides ample proof that for the United States of America, the road to hell is marked by signs reading "Law and Order." One of the most obscene examples of this was Senator Robert



Dole's recent campaign tour of the death chamber at California's San Quentin prison. This hypocritical crusader for "decency" presented himself as the head cheerleader for executions in the very presence of those already condemned. This goes beyond the usual campaign

(continued on page 9)

ON THE INSIDE

From Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya •
Do Marxists know Marx? page 4
Dialogue from India • On the dialectics of
Women's Liberation page 5

We urgently need your help to stay in the fight!

The global nature of the myriad economic and political crises we suffer today is easily seen in the headlines of any daily paper. We learn of the unconscionable slaughter of hundreds of Lebanese civilians, caught in the veritable rain of Israeli bombs retaliating against the Hezbollah's Katyusha rockets. We are told the slaughter of the Bosnian people is past, now that four years of Serbian and Croatian aggression and a so-called "peace plan" has succeeded in the complete partition of that tortured land. At home, pictures of the beatings of immigrant Mexican laborers recall pictures of the beating of a Black motorist, Rodney King—while "law and order" is daily meted out on the heads of youth, especially, who are treated like the "throw away" generation. Meanwhile, at the same time that we are told the economy is "picking up," it has become harder and harder for working families to make ends meet. And "downsizing" has become the euphemism for discarding half of a work force and speeding up those remaining—while corporate profits soar.

Every day we are told there is no alternative to this barbaric system. This makes it crucial to recognize the forces in revolt against this barbarism and let them be heard—the kind of voices that are heard in every issue of *News & Letters*. They are heard in this issue in the report of Women for Peace in Israel; in the stories of Black workers fighting for union recognition in the South; in our Lead on prisoners determined to speak for themselves. They ring louder and clearer in these pages because only here are they heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of revolution that discerns the future from within the dialectic of the present.

It is that unique combination of philosophy and revolution that makes it urgent to keep *N&L* alive and to help strengthen its outreach. This year that involves ev-

everything from our publication of a new, expanded edition of *Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of "Western Civilization"*; to our assistance to help bring to reality a new pamphlet written by prisoners themselves; to the establishment of a new local News and Letters Committee in the South. In all these tasks, WE NEED YOUR HELP MORE THAN EVER.

We urgently ask for your help to pay the ever-rising bills for our office rent, our staggering postage costs, the \$1,500 it costs to print every issue of *N&L*. And this year we are asking your special help to pay the additional \$3,700 printing bill for our new edition of the only book on the struggle for a multiethnic Bosnia which links the urgency of developing its concept to our struggles right here at home.

As we have since our birth over four decades ago, we must turn to you, our readers, to help us keep *News & Letters* alive and growing. YOUR SUPPORT WAS NEVER MORE NEEDED. PLEASE GIVE AS GENEROUSLY AS YOU CAN TO HELP US CONTINUE!

☐ Enclosed is my contribution \$_____ to help keep *N&L* going.

☐ I am enclosing \$_____ for gift subscriptions (addresses enclosed).

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Middle East: bombs, revenge and hope

Editor's note: Below we print excerpts from the passionate words of an Israeli feminist and peace activist which reached us too late for the last issue, but are even more important today in light of the recent horrors in Lebanon. We conclude with her update on Lebanon.

Jerusalem—On Sunday, March 3, I awoke to the second bomb in Jerusalem. This time "only" 18 dead, "only" 7 seriously wounded. But Sunday was the last day that my friend Nahum would sit in official mourning for his son, killed in the first bomb a week earlier, so I felt I had to see him, although I was afraid to use the buses. After I left Nahum, I decided I was brave enough to take the bus 18 home. Everything was quiet until we got to the area of the bomb, where mobs were gathering and beginning to get violent. They were shouting "Death to Arabs," and "Death to Peres." After about 15 minutes, the police got the mob to let the bus through.

The next day I heard two wonderful items of news at noon: 1) The head Muslim Sheikh in Israel declared that terrorism was against the Koran and called upon clergy throughout the Muslim world to call for an end to it; 2) A mass demonstration of several thousand people in Gaza came out to support the peace process and called for an end to the bombs and terrorism.

At 4 p.m. the third bomb went off. The newscaster said that so far there were about 15 dead and over a hundred wounded, some of them children.

Then the next blow: The government announced its "defense" measures against terrorism, Prime Minister Peres trying to placate the Right by the old-fashioned "iron fist" policy. It would be a total closure of the territories, including foodstuffs and medical supplies, the demolition of the homes of the families whose sons had been the suicide bombers and possible expulsions of the male members of the families.

I called the B'Tselem human rights organization (where I was about to step down as chair) and we talked about how to stop it. But bad precedents make all of this a struggle doomed to failure. Not a single case to prevent collective punishment of Palestinians has been won ever since the occupation began.

After considerable soul searching, I finally decided to call the mother of someone who was just killed—who I knew might be sympathetic—to ask if she would be willing to speak out against the house demolitions. Well, although she agreed with the principle, she didn't agree to do it for various personal reasons, especially not "exploiting the death" of her son to advance any form of ideology. I do understand and respect that, but what a lost opportunity. It also makes me want to say right here out loud, on paper:

If I get hurt or killed in a terrorist act, I refuse to sanction the use of my injury or death by the government of Israel to justify harm to innocent people. Furthermore, I hereby authorize use of my injury or death to advance the cause of peace, including blatant use of my funeral or mourning or death, and especially all acts of outreach, kindness, compassion and humanity to all those responsible for my death.

That night, a Peace Now demonstration was quickly organized and I went bearing a homemade sign: "Peace = No more revenge! Do not harm innocent families." Amazingly, the organizers became incensed at the sign, and asked me to stand apart from everyone else. Some of them objected because they were afraid it would sound like criticism of Peres (it was!!), who the demonstration wanted to support, and others because they disagreed with the sentiment!

Women in Action forum

Berkeley, Cal.—The Long Haul community activist center sponsored a ground-breaking meeting for feminists on April 1, entitled "Women in Action: a forum on radical women's organizations." The forum brought together over 50 women from a variety of women's organizations including STORM (Standing Together to Organize a Revolutionary Movement), the Lesbian Avengers, Asian Immigrant Women Advocates and Comite Emiliano Zapata to discuss "What are we doing? What directions are we moving in?"

One woman from STORM, a group formed by mostly women of color who wanted to study theory and history as well as act upon what they had learned, said, "We're at a critical space in history. We have to take from people's experiences and what they've seen."

A woman from the Lesbian Avengers (LA), a group known for its creative activism, spoke of how their group wanted to go beyond just trying to gain media attention. "It's the revolutionary movement, that's where I'm heading." In the East Bay, the LA are expanding their work to include race and class issues.

A woman from Comite Emiliano Zapata, a group which bases its vision on the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, asked, "Am I working to be a Latina with a job, or am I working to develop a vision of a whole different world?" Within a mere five minutes of this woman speaking, the forum participants had decided to sponsor another meeting in one month to discuss "our visions of the future."

I was so excited by this event, especially after feeling frustrated during the past several years with my involvement in feminist groups who limit their scope to planning actions and refuse to give ample space for developing ideas about where we are going with our revolutionary feminism and how to relate to others fighting for a new kind of society where we can be free.

I look forward to the second Women in Action forum scheduled for May 6 at the Long Haul. Call 510-540-0751 for more information. —Julia Jones

Even the famed left-wing author, David Grossman, whose book *Yellow Wind* did more to raise awareness of the oppressive nature of the occupation than almost anything else, spoke out publicly in favor of the house demolitions, calling them "painful but legitimate."

The only ray of hope—as usual in Israel—is the women's peace movement. A week ago, a group of Jerusalem women got together and decided to put an ad in the paper of women who condemn the collective punishment. Just about all the 250 Jewish and Arab women who signed the ad had been peace activists during the years of the intifada, almost all in the Women in Black vigils.

* * *

April 22—And then another round began with Lebanon. "They started it," both sides were saying, which would have been laughable had it not resulted in 400,000 people fleeing their homes and more pointless death and destruction. So it's back to the streets. One Jerusalem intersection now has three regular demonstrations on facing corners, each touting peace: "Peace with Peres" (i.e., support Peres and he'll find a way to climb down from the tree of war); "Peace with the Likud" (i.e., support the Likud and they'll bomb the Hezbollah into submission) and, less abstractly, Women in Black's "Get Out of Lebanon."

How long can we in the Middle East keep up this level of intensity? We haven't even recovered from the bombs, finished demolishing all the houses or lifted the closure, and we get distracted by yet another war. Maybe we just have to learn how to focus. —Gila Svirsky

See "Lebanon invasion undermines peace process," page 12.

Thousands 'fight the right'

San Francisco—Tens of thousands of people desiring to "Fight the Right" filled a park near Fort Mason on April 14. Sponsored by the National Organization for Women, the event was organized to demand no retreat on affirmative action, fight racism and immigrant bashing, support medicaid and medicare, protect abortion and reproductive rights, stop all forms of violence against women, ban discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation, promote fair labor practices and end the war on poor people. Such a melding of issues is unprecedented in national marches such as this.

The most notably focused and energetic group was the contingent of immigrants rights activists. Waving colorfully painted banners, "Who is the illegal alien?" and "Borders are for squares," the crowd chanted, "Aquí estamos y no nos vamos, y si nos echa regresamos" (We're here and we're staying, and if they throw us out we'll come back!)

Other contingents included an astounding number of Les/bi/gay activists, coalitions for affirmative action, young feminists, health rights organizations, labor unions, environmental activists, welfare rights groups, animal liberationists and a huge contingent from the groups fighting the Civil "Wrongs" Initiative (CCRI).

Despite their pleasure for the opportunity to come out against the Right, many showed disappointment with the liberal focus of the official speakers who promoted an active relationship to electoral politics. Many were frustrated by such self-limitations and wanted to talk about how to move forward.

Despite this, thousands left hopeful of a revitalization of the fight against the Right. As one Black homeless woman put it, "We must go back to our communities and become the leading force in this country." I couldn't agree more. —Participant

Mitsubishi intimidation

Normal, Ill.—Mitsubishi Motor's response to the sexual harassment charges against the company has divided workers and resulted in a backlash against the plaintiffs. Mitsubishi has made it easy for employees to support the company instead of their fellow workers.

Telephones were installed at the plant so that workers could call the EEOC and legislators at no charge. A three-page handout was distributed with names and addresses of local and regional newspapers, the White House and the EEOC, as well as legislators. Workers were told at a "unity" meeting that if they did not stick together, car sales would drop and people could lose their jobs.

The women have experienced direct intimidation from both the company and fellow workers. Mitsubishi has asked the court for documents on the women involved in a private lawsuit against the company, including complete gynecological records, information on abortions, divorce records, the names and addresses of people with whom they have cohabitated as well as the women's credit card records.

Attorney Pat Benassi was told that a message in the men's bathroom warned that if women caused him to lose his job, he would "go hunting" for women. The local newspaper reported that as a female employee was leaving an employee meeting someone told her, "Watch your back b----." Another woman found a note in her locker which read, "Die b----! You'll be sorry."

Women need to be able to go to work free from fear of harassment. The Mitsubishi lawsuit offers us the opportunity to stand up in defense of women everywhere who have suffered the humiliation of sexual harassment. —Sherrin Fitzer

Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey



More than 100 pro-choice supporters rallied outside the federal building in Chicago, April 1, denouncing the threats of Operation Rescue "terrorists" to close down abortion clinics during the week of the Democratic Convention in August. "The clinics will stay open!" vowed the demonstrators.

* * *

A group of German social activists has formed Intact: International Action Against Circumcision, an organization to help the international campaign to publicize in the West the medical dangers of female genital mutilation, and to help women's groups in Asia and Africa who are fighting to end this misogynist practice. An estimated 100 million women, as well as two million more young girls each year, are victims of this barbarous procedure. More than 150,000 young girls die annually when this occurs under unsanitary conditions.

* * *

Housekeeping workers at the Red Lion Coliseum Inn in Portland, Or.—mostly immigrants and women of color—are fighting health problems caused by toxic cleaning products; harassment on the job, and poverty level wages. Despite meetings to discuss these dangers, Red Lion management has refused to make changes.

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

Washington) "Mitsubishi's efforts to pressure its employees into demonstrating," Don Shelby, vice president of the local "said the local told members they were free to attend the protest" (Chicago Sun-Times, April 23). The local reportedly has refused to reiterate the UAW's position against sexual harassment or to use this opportunity to educate its members on what sexual harassment is.

The context for this specific abdication of responsibility is 15 years of the labor bureaucracy's general abdication, beginning in the early 1980s with a "controlled" or "strategic" retreat on wages and working conditions, followed by implementation of employee participation/team concept schemes. Labor "leaders" bought into the ideology of "competitiveness," the myth of a common interest between workers and company in saving jobs, and thereby undermined the principles of unionism. No wonder the Mitsubishi local is unable and/or unwilling to establish an identity independent of the company.

One of the lawyers representing 29 women who filed a private civil suit in December 1994 against Mitsubishi for sexual harassment told me that the company's defense is "these women are sluts." That defense was amplified by a worker at the Chicago rally: You do it with them six days a week, and then one day you're on your period or you got out on the wrong side of bed and you don't want to be bothered, so you go file charges.

Vilifying women, their sexuality and their determination to choose their own relationships and lives is a tactic Mitsubishi shares with right-wingers who attempt to control women on welfare through "reform." Sexual harassment and being on welfare are supposedly personal, not social, problems. These attitudes are only attempts to make women feel more isolated and helpless. I know, as a woman subjected to sexual harassment, how confused and hurt a woman can feel, how it cuts to the very heart of who she is as a human being. No one else can determine for you when your humanity has been violated.

The union, asserted the same worker, has to remain neutral because it represents both the accusers and the accused. A true workers' organization, however, represents not specific individuals nor simply the majority (in this case men), but stands for the interests of the labor movement as a whole and takes care of the future of that movement. Company loyalty and sexual harassment are the past and the present; they are not the future.

It is not enough to wait for the women to testify in court when we will find out exactly what happened. We, labor activists and women's liberationists, must find a way to support these women, even though they remain mostly hidden due to a well-founded fear of retaliation. At stake is the future of the workers' movement and its relationship to working women, who must be an integral part of it.

Boycott supports Taylor Chair strike

Clarksdale, Miss.—Workers at Taylor Chair in Clarksdale, Miss., the Delta town made famous as the "Home of the Blues," have plenty of reason to be singing the blues. The workers, members of Furniture Workers Division, IUE, Local 282, have been on strike since Jan. 11. Although the mostly Black work force only makes an average of \$6.50 an hour, they were forced onto the picket line by a management determined to extract devastating givebacks in a new contract.

Taylor Chair, a wealthy, family-owned corporation based in Ohio, is demanding that the workers agree to losing sick pay and optical benefits, freezing wages for two years and raising the employees' out-of-pocket health care deductible by over 600%. In addition, the company wants the monthly premium increases in 1997 to be paid entirely by the workers, whether \$50 or \$500.

The real issue, say the workers, is this: Why should Taylor Chair workers in Mississippi be treated as second-class employees compared with Taylor Chair workers in unionized plants in Ohio and California? Workers in Taylor's Bedford, Ohio plant make nearly twice what workers in Clarksdale make and get better benefits. The workers call it "plantation wages."

A flyer written by Taylor Chair workers sums it up: "For many years, the Taylor family has presented them-

selves as the model of compassion, fairness, decency and willingness to help the underprivileged. This is the image they display in the Cleveland/Bedford, Ohio area, but in the Mississippi Delta town of Clarksdale, Dr. Jekyll becomes the vicious Mr. Hyde with a display of arrogance that is seldom shown by Southern plantation owners. For instance: Women are paid less than men for performing comparable work. Qualified women and minorities are overlooked for promotions. All we want is to be treated with fairness, equality, dignity and respect. Is this asking too much of a company that prides itself in being the oldest furniture manufacturer in the U.S.?"

"Negotiations have been a mockery of the process," says Local 282 president Willie Rudd. "We don't even have a date for the next talks." Workers have picketed the plant every day since Jan. 11, through ice and tornado warnings. Most of the workers walked out, but a few scabs and supervisors continue to cross the picket line. "They aren't getting much done in there," Rudd said. "The Bedford plant had to close down several days last month because they didn't have parts from Clarksdale."

Willie Rudd went to Cleveland the first week of April where he was joined by other IUE locals and local unions from the Central Labor Council in picketing a Taylor Chair showroom. Picket lines in other cities are now being planned and so is a march in Clarksdale involving union and civil rights supporters in Mississippi. They are calling on union members and friends to spread the word about the struggle at Taylor.

For information, call the Nashville office of IUE Local 282, at (615) 889-8860.

**BOYCOTT TAYLOR CHAIR!
JOIN THE PICKET LINES IN YOUR CITY!**

Newspaper strike deepens



Detroit—Nearly 4,000 striking newspaper workers and their families, and supporters from other unions and the community jammed into Cobo Convention Center's Riverfront Ballroom April 13 for a rally led by striker Susan Watson who edits the *Detroit Sunday Journal* (published by strikers). Spirits were high as the crowd cheered AFL-CIO officers John Sweeney, Linda Chavez-Thompson and Richard Trumka.

All six unions on strike against the Detroit Newspaper Agency (DNA) have refused to bargain separately since they walked out July 13, 1995. The DNA has not held talks since Feb. 13; the reason, they claim, is an ongoing NLRB investigation into charges brought by the unions on nine counts of labor law violations. The DNA failed to respond to subpoenas delivered in February by the six unions and unilaterally declared an "impasse." On April 25 they declared (again unilaterally) that their workplace was now an open shop, which means that workers may "choose" whether or not to belong to a union.

Support for the strike continues to broaden. Several community and union leaders traveled to the Knight-Ridder shareholder meeting in Miami to plead the strikers' cause. Readers United, a community and labor coalition, continues to spearhead civil disobedience actions every Thursday outside the Detroit News Building. (To date, 232 people have been arrested.)

Despite a television advertising campaign and manipulative telemarketing by the DNA to increase circulation, the unions have asked people to refuse to subscribe to or advertise in the scab newspapers and to subscribe to the *Sunday Journal* instead (call 313/567-9818).

—News and Letters Committee member

Jobs and Living Wages

Chicago—A powerful voice was raised in favor of raising the minimum wage and obtaining a living wage for all workers on April 25, when over 2,000 marched as part of the Jobs and Living Wages Campaign.

About 1,000 members of the SEIU (who were holding their national convention at the time) joined the march, as did workers from other unions, ranging from the UFCW to the Teamsters. But the most distinctive dimension of this march was the hundreds of unemployed and/or homeless Black men and women from the South Side who joined with "organized" trade unions.

Many from a homeless shelter on the South Side were clearly angered at Mayor Daley's decision to close the homeless shelter in the Loop as a way to present a "clean" image of Chicago for the upcoming Democratic National Convention. Many of the unemployed came to voice their support for an ordinance that would require city contracts to be awarded to companies that provide a wage of no less than \$7.57 an hour.

Though it was most unusual to see so many unionized workers marching alongside the unemployed and homeless, many felt this was precisely the kind of coalescence needed to make the voices of labor and the Black dimension heard.

—Peter Wermuth

On new labor organizers

by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

I read where college students are being recruited by labor unions to become organizers and that the young people see this as working for social change. Chris Woods, who runs the AFL-CIO's efforts, said that she had been "surprised by the upswing in applications from college campuses." She went on to state that students from many major colleges are applying for full-time jobs as organizers after graduation.

These students realize they're the first generation that will have a lower standard of living than their parents. They are beginning to realize that change has to come from them. There is no future getting a job in a large corporation because downsizing would have you back on the street before you could get the chair bottom warm at your desk.

I am a retired auto worker, farmer, and from the coal mining part of eastern Kentucky. I come out of the 1930s, when preachers, workers and unemployed became union organizers by first organizing themselves. You were not taught organizing unions in college when I was a young man. For the most part, in those days, you were taught how to lick the capitalists' boots. I am glad to read where these young people see what capitalism has done and want to do something to change this social system from destroying all of humanity.

I think the new generation should first get jobs and learn from the workers on the jobs. There is where they will get real education. A bourgeois education can help also, if it is used in the right ways. The two together can help workers and organizers organize themselves.

Then the power of production can be transformed in the hands of the workers where it rightfully belongs. Production in the hands of capitalists, and workers under control of "labor leaders," cannot work for the good of all people.

Those 70 million jobs that have been created since 1979, that Chamber of Commerce officials try to brainwash you with, are low-paying part-time jobs. No one can get married and raise a family on part-time work. This is the world of capitalism in the year of 1996. Only the people themselves can change things. To do what they need a philosophy, a Marxist-Humanist philosophy of revolution in permanence.

Swindled out of benefits

Somerville, Tenn.—When Somerville Mills sent its production to Mexico and laid off all the sewing machine operators—most of whom were the union members (see *News & Letters*, March 1996)—about 40 of us applied for unemployment insurance. Then we were ordered to jobs at Allison Corporation and Master Apparel, and all of us had our unemployment cut off.

At a hearing on one woman's appeal, the unemployment representative, claimed that the worker said she wasn't interested in working and had other options and didn't come in. The worker said that when called for sewing jobs she reminded the unemployment representative that after surgery for carpal tunnel syndrome, she didn't want to take a chance on injuring her wrists again. She was told it doesn't make any difference and then asked twice, "Are you coming in?" Four days later the worker received a notice in the mail saying her unemployment had been terminated for refusing a job.

When the union representative explained the reason the worker didn't want a sewing job was because of injury, the referee cut her off, saying, "I have no interest whatsoever." He didn't want it on record that she wasn't refusing work, just that job, because it would damage her wrist. That would show unemployment was discriminating against someone because of a disability.

When questioned, the unemployment representative admitted that they got a call from Nashville, the state capital, and were ordered to send the Somerville workers to jobs at Allison Corporation and Master Apparel. The union representative asked, why weren't other unemployed people offered these jobs? "Because we were only told to send the workers from Somerville Mills" was the answer.

The call from Nashville was from John Wilder, the Lieutenant Governor of Tennessee. He has a hand in everything going on in Nashville and he has always supported the companies.

For years, Mr. Wilder has been running things here in Fayette County. About 90% of Fayette County used to be owned by Blacks. Wilder and banks he was working with made loans to farmers and other poor people in the community—made them loans they couldn't pay back and forced them to give up their land.

—Garment worker

Injuries at Sinai Kosher

Chicago—There's a lot of harassment at Sinai Kosher when people get hurt. The human resources department ordered a woman with a broken ankle to report for light duty work. Why can't they let people like her stay home?

They have their trophies in the office for a good accident record, but they get them by keeping hurt people on the job. That's why they harass you if you're hurt.

Quite a few of the women have problems with their hands or wrists. On the packaging lines, if your hand hurts, you have to keep going. The company knows there's a problem. They used to give out ace bandages, but they didn't do any good. Now they have people wearing wrist bands that go around the thumb and up the wrist, but they don't help either. They are so uncomfortable that come people can't wear them.

—Sinai Kosher workers

A wake-up call for GM

Shreveport, La.—Five days after the 17-day strike in Dayton, Ohio which stopped production at most GM North American operations, we went back to work at the GM plant here. By returning to work on a Wednesday we lost that week's unemployment insurance payment (\$193) as well as pay for a short work week (95% of our weekly pay).

The strike sent a signal to all workers that GM needs the workers much more than the workers need GM. It's a shame that some workers have been so brainwashed that they don't even realize the power or control that they themselves have. Most of those I've talked to are worried about more plants going on strike. Don't they understand that with each strike we could strengthen labor instead of the capitalist?

I think the union was established so all workers' rights can be protected. But my feeling is that we let the union sell each of us out. I feel a union is better than no union, but workers need more than what they have—especially when you pay union dues.

On April 15 UAW Local 112 workers at the Lordsburg, Ohio assembly plant walked out three hours after the first shift started, due to the firing of a shop chairman. After GM demanded that the workers come back to work, it went to a Cleveland Court for an injunction to end the walkout.

What's happening at GM? Have workers finally decided to use their own minds? I think it scares the capitalists to see that workers have their own thoughts and ideas. What happened in the 17-day Dayton strike has caused GM workers to move. The Dayton strike has also scared the hell out of some workers.

I say to GM that this is your wake-up call. People who struggle to make ends meet will, when pushed, revolt! I hope that workers who are afraid of change remember how the strikes and movements of labor in the past have helped create a better chance for labor now. But now the capitalist wants all the surplus and wants workers to give back what the workers before us had to do to get us to where we are today!

—GM workers

Why loss at American Cat

Itta Bena, Miss.—The union was defeated at American Catfish on April 5 (see *News & Letters*, April 1996.) The count was 115 to 64 against the union and we had 187 out of 221 sign UFCW Local 1529 union cards. Someone backed down. We got together to discuss why.

Some of the workers had tried to tell us: "Y'all didn't win." "Y'all"?!! It's not "You all," because you all are the union. They know they can do better, it's just being afraid to do better.

A week before the election a worker got up and said he had worked for a union plant, Delta Pride, that he was fired three times on a trumped up charge and all three times he got his job back with back pay and no lost seniority. That evening they went back two months to fire him for not bringing an excuse for going to a meeting.

A Black woman union activist responded: "That's what killed it! Everyone got scared." People feel, "I can't lose that job. They fired him because he was talking union, so I better leave this union stuff alone." I was looking for a job when I came here, and I will be looking for one when I leave. So I don't have to bow down and scrape and kiss and lick and lap just to keep a little job. If they ever realized that they are the union, they would do something."

Another Black woman unionist said, "When they realize the Man lied, these people will be back. The Man was saying, 'I'm going to give you something and that's it.' Next time, give me the contract."

The first woman summed it up: "The workers at Sealy Mattress in Memphis had 13 elections before they got a contract. I honestly believe that organized labor is going to revive because of the treatment, the downsizing and cutting of the wages and allegedly trying to compete. Workers just take so much and then will do something about it. It's going to take some dedicated work."

—Black women union fighters

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

Editor's Note

A celebration of Karl Marx's birth (May 5, 1818, in Trier, Germany) can be a way to recreate his new continent of thought and revolution for today. That is why this month we excerpt a letter by Raya Dunayevskaya to Marxist-Humanists. It previewed a talk she was to give on May 4, 1980, to the Detroit News and Letters Committee on Marx's philosophy of revolution in permanence.

Immediately following the lecture, which she titled "A birthtime of history," Dunayevskaya offered the first tentative outline of her book, then known as the "Rosa Luxemburg book." "Post-Marx Marxism as pejorative," her critique of all those who have limited Marx's own Marxism, became the central concept in the book published as *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* in 1981.

N&L readers can find the full letter and outline in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of its World Development* (pp. 6454-6458).

April 8, 1980

I wish to write on the special May 4 meeting on Karl Marx's birth, not as a day but as what Hegel called "a birthtime of history," and what we call a new continent of thought and of revolution. It will be a projection of some of the fundamental points of the final chapter of the Rosa Luxemburg book. That may be, and is, a contradiction to the dialectical principle that you cannot know before you know. In the specific instance of the book when I have finished only about half of it, this means I cannot possibly relate to it directly. Yet as a review of the 40 years of Marx's creativity, from the moment of his break with bourgeois society in 1843 and the early writings, to a brief four months before his death and the *Ethnological Notebooks*, the talk cannot but relate all Marxists (including Rosa Luxemburg) since Marx's death to the new continent of thought Marx discovered.

Our age has one advantage, that of knowing more of Marx's writing than did Luxemburg's age. We as Marxist-Humanists, again by drawing no distinction between "the young" and "the mature" Marx, made philosophy, economics and politics into a totality. The objective situation helped us since it was the period of a new type of revolution (Hungary 1956) against Communism's transformation into opposite, state-capitalism, thus creating a movement from practice to theory and compelling revolutionary theoreticians to constantly create anew.

Nevertheless we must never forget Hegel's warning about knowing something so well as to take it for granted: "In general, what is well known, precisely because it is well known, is not known. The most common mode of self-delusion and of creating illusions for others is, in knowledge, to presuppose something as being well known, and to accept it as such. Such knowledge, without being aware that this is happening, refuses to budge despite all discussion." (*Phenomenology of Mind*, Preface).

Take, for example, the fact that all of Marx's works have the word "critique" in them, and we certainly know that from the time he was working with Arnold Ruge and trying to start a new magazine, Marx wrote him in September 1843 that the purpose of the journal must be "the relentless critique of everything that exists." But has "critique" been made the equivalent of "revolutionary" and "practical" as totally as it was with Marx, beginning with the *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* which he completed the next year?

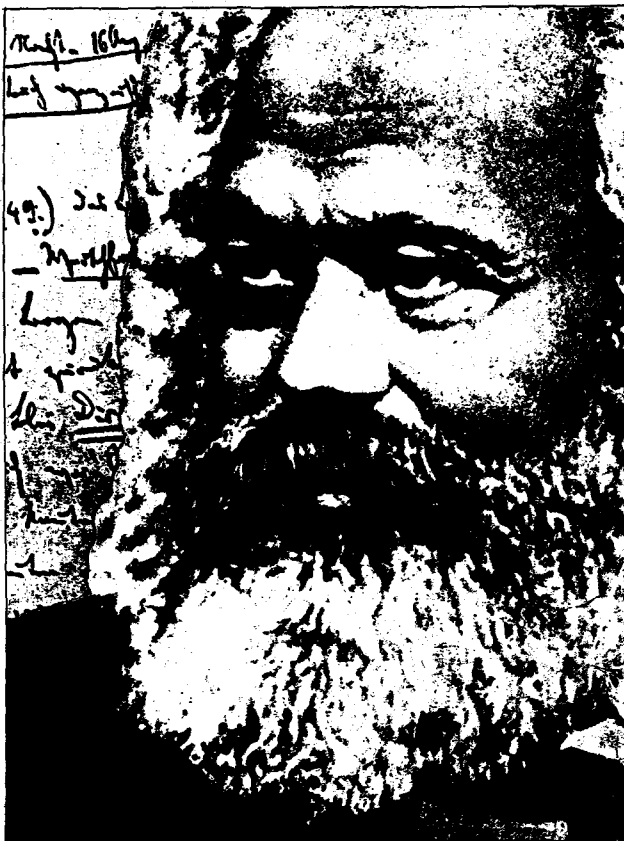
Those manuscripts didn't, after all, come to light for some 84 years, needed nothing short of the November 1917 Russian Revolution to bring them out of the Second International's vaults, and another 38 years before a new generation of revolutionaries, rebelling against the new monstrosity of Russian state-capitalism, brought them onto this period's historic stage, and thereby also to the English-speaking world. Nearly a quarter of a century has passed since then and while we have produced more of that whole new continent of thought Marx had discovered in 1844 than either the old left or the so-called New Left, it is first now that we are scheduling, at one and the same time, a new book and projecting the transformation of *News & Letters* into a theoretical as well as an activist organ. So again I say the fact that "we know," and indeed "live by" the fact that Marx was a revolutionary does not yet mean grasping in full Marxism as a whole new continent of thought.

Luxemburg certainly was a revolutionary, and so was Lenin, and so was Trotsky, and even some Social-Democrats who later turned out to be counter-revolutionaries, were revolutionaries when they first established the new Second, Marxist International. None of them saw it as a new continent of thought (except Lenin, who had to break with his philosophic past and have the world fall about him in the First World War before, by returning to Marx's deep-rootedness in Hegel, he recognized that not a single Marxist, himself included, had understood Marx's *Capital*; especially its first chapter).

What I'm driving at is that if you recognize Marx only as founder of a socialism and not as the founder of a new continent of thought, your attitude is such that of necessity you recognize also Lassalle as a founder. As for Engels, who was also not only a founder but the only one ca-

pable of issuing Volumes 2 and 3 of *Capital*, didn't he also nevertheless first rush to issue his own *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, as a "bequest" by Marx? And here was a man, a founder who knew that Marx was "one" and he was only "two"!

Let me try to stress that point from a different direction. That point is crucial not just for the book, not just for the May 4 talk, but for the whole march of history to that point of unity of philosophy and revolution. For, otherwise, we would always have a duality—philosophy and revolution—instead of philosophy of revolution. Let me state first, on the question of Lassalle as a founder,



that that type of attitude is exactly what led inexorably to the revolutionary, super-erudite scholar and author of the first (and still, unfortunately, one of the best) biographers of Marx—Franz Mehring—shutting all doors to any conception of what a new continent of thought Marxism was. Class struggle, yes; brilliant, yes; a founder, yes; but that shouldn't keep "the new generation" (I'm referring to August Bebel) from writing rather angrily about the "two old men in London" not really understanding "the new." The "new" Bebel was referring to was the need for a "unified Party" predominating over theoretical quibbling. Reconsider this:

1) In 1875 the Lassalleans and the Eisenachists (supposedly full Marxists) are uniting to form a new party at Gotha. Lassalle is dead, but its program is fully Lassallean. 2) Marx and Engels hit the ceiling, want to disassociate themselves from that Party, but instead feel that the movement is so important that they should limit themselves to criticizing it in lengthy letters to the Eisenachists. 3) Marx writes "marginal notes" on that program; the *Critique of the Gotha Program* is one of the greatest of the shorter historical political writings ever, but it doesn't get published. 4) Sixteen years pass, a new, mass, "genuinely Marxist Party" [the Second International] is headed by Karl Kautsky, Bebel, Eduard Bernstein—and they write a new program, the Erfurt Program. Engels is still alive and when he sees that program, he writes a critical letter and insists that Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program* now be published. When they finally can resist no longer, they publish it with an editorial note which says that it is "a contribution to the discussion."

And that, dear youth and others, is what the whole International lived on until its total collapse in 1914. How much clearer would the road have been for all of us had we known Marx's analysis not only of the Lassalleans, but of his first meeting with Kautsky: "A small-minded mediocrity, too clever by half (he is only 26), industrious in a certain way, busies himself with statistics but does not derive anything intelligent from them, belonging by nature to the tribe of Philistines." (Letter from Marx to his daughter Jenny, April 11, 1881)

The question, the serious question, is the attitude of the serious revolutionaries, serious in the sense of their acknowledging "orthodox Marxism"—could they also be just egotistic and "correctly" non-cultist regarding Marx when they acted that "independently"? No, it's a great deal worse, for it was not only those who deviated but those who were "orthodox," "sincere," and revolutionary. No wonder Lenin said there is no such thing as a "sincerometer." What made them believe otherwise is that they were not petty-bourgeois individualists. They "sincerely" believed they were reducing their own individuality to the Universal of socialism, as was "proven" by the fact that the most important thing for them was to "popularize Marx" and "apply" it to the concrete situation as they saw it.

So it wasn't just that they didn't know the 1844 Manuscripts, or that their understanding of the 1850s and the *Critique of Political Economy* was inadequate because they didn't have the *Grundrisse*, but that when theory

was spelled out in organizational form, they felt free to disagree on "little" organizational questions.

Let's take another look at those 1844 Manuscripts and deal this time with still a newer generation of intellectuals that discovered them. One of the finest analyses of the 1844 Manuscripts was one of the first—Herbert Marcuse's—when it was finally published in Germany in 1932. The very title of his review essay, "The Foundation of Historical Materialism," shows that the young Marcuse, far from separating the early philosophical Marx from the mature economist, actually made the early work the foundation for Marxism and for all aspects summarized in historical materialism. He certainly was also the one who saw revolution as inherent in the very first writings of Marx. This 45-page essay is quite comprehensive in the economic, political and philosophic aspects.

And yet there is not one single word of Marx's profundities on the Man-Woman relationship, though it's in the very same paragraph that Marx speaks against vulgar communism which is what Marcuse did recognize as central. Nor is it only a question that there was no movement from practice as a Women's Liberation Movement. Marx first had the vision and the philosophy and the "new humanism" which he declared was both a compelling need and had a revolutionary force.

Clearly, it isn't only the last few years of Marx's life when he was working on the *Ethnological Notebooks* that need to be brought back to life, to theory, and made into a challenge for our generation. For that matter, the very year, 1871, which supposedly every Marxist understood and certainly always celebrated—the Paris Commune—remained nothing but a celebration. It wasn't until Lenin, on the eve of revolution, "rewrote" *The Civil War in France as State and Revolution* that the Paris Commune was studied seriously as both theory and practice, as well as foundation for new revolutions.

Let's not forget that to this day, the anarchists keep saying that Lenin wrote *State and Revolution* as pure demagoguery whereas they followed the true intellectual forebearers of the Paris Commune—Proudhonists and Bakuninists. In a word, it is not only Lenin they oppose but Marx they slander as an alleged "statist" though the whole of *The Civil War in France*, as the whole of *State and Revolution*, is directed to the destruction of the bourgeois state, to establishing "no state" but the commune form of existence since, said Marx, the greatest achievement of the Paris Commune was "its own working existence."

May 4, which brings Marx's May 5 birthday a day ahead of time, follows by three days May 1. The two [dates] give that new continent of thought its American roots as well as its Black dimension. I hope we never consider as a cliché Marx's statement that "Labor in the white skin cannot be free so long as labor in the Black skin is branded." It was, after all, not only as an oppressed race that Marx embraced the Black dimension, but as that creative revolutionary force which opened a new epoch for the whole world. It is in this sense that this year's "May celebration" opens up a new stage for us both as the year of Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution and as the period of the transformation of *News & Letters* into a twelve page theoretical as well as activist organ. I'm confident that this also means that you will not keep the date of the meeting as your secret, but bring part of the "outside" world with you to it.

* The so-called independent, erudite Marxists who think *State and Revolution* is no more than a "rewrite" of Marx's analysis of the Paris Commune should study, study very carefully, how Georg Lukacs and Karl Korsch, the very Marxists who did reintroduce dialectics as the indispensable revolutionary element in Marxism, nevertheless stopped short, far short, of identifying dialectics of the Idea with the dialectic of liberation; whereas Lenin went directly from Hegel's *Science of Logic* and its principle, that "man's cognition not only reflects the world but creates it," to the National Question as the dialectic of history that would help transform the imperialist war into a civil war, and his very last Testament where he characterized Bukharin as not fully a Marxist because he did not understand the dialectic.

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Dialogue from India: On the dialectics of Women's Liberation

*Editor's note: A new book has recently been published by revolutionaries in India entitled **Dialectics of Women's Liberation**, which contains six chapters of Raya Dunayevskaya's **Women's Liberation** and the **Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future**. Because of the importance of their effort to rethink the meaning of Marxist-Humanism for the reality facing today's freedom struggles, we publish here excerpts of the Foreword (by Arvind Ghosh) and Preface (by Nita and Shankar).*

From the Foreword

The relationship between Marxism and the Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) has remained strained due to two reasons. First is the attitude of Marxists and Communists who have rejected the WLM as totally bourgeois and therefore not worthy of support. A section of Marxists have evaded the whole question by saying that women's oppression is inevitable under capitalism and can only be abolished when that society is overthrown—thus ignoring the ways in which the oppression of women itself becomes an obstacle to the overthrow of capitalism and therefore a struggle against this oppression becomes an integral part of the struggle against capitalism. Second is the attitude of theorists of the WLM who have rejected Marxism as inadequate and even incapable of explaining women's oppression and therefore of little use to the WLM. According to these theoreticians, Marx is supposed to have totally ignored the presence of womankind in the reality he was analyzing.

Michelle Barrett, known as a Marxist feminist, writes, "On the question of feminism even the most committed Marxists now suspect that our idol has feet of clay. Many feminists see this weakness as one which vitiates the whole of Marx's works. Gone are the days when 'The Woman Question' could be answered from the writings of Marx: his treatment of the issue is now widely regarded as scattered and unsatisfactory. The situation is scarcely improved by the fact that much of what is attributed to Marx, particularly in relation to the emancipation of women, was in fact the work of Engels. It is not entirely clear how far Marx himself accepted arguments, such as those eventually set out in Engels' *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*."



Alison Jaggar goes even further: "Marxist theory was not designed primarily to provide an account of women's nature and women's oppression. What Marxism has to say about women is peripheral to the central claims of the theory, so that Marxist reflections on women's situation could be dropped entirely without changing the system in a substantial way."

Even the far-left socialist feminist Sheila Rowbotham is no exception to this general line of thinking. She writes, "Although Marx was formally committed to the legal emancipation of women and to the right to work, his intellectual passion was not directed towards relations between men and women, but towards class."

In this monotonous backdrop Raya Dunayevskaya's views comes as a refreshing change. Here is a Marxist revolutionary who is at the same time an activist and a theoretician of the WLM. She appears on the scene as a sharp critic of those Marxists as well as WLM theorists who have tried to reduce Marx to a single discipline—either as an economist, a philosopher, an anthropologist or a political strategist—forgetting that "Marx at all times, in theory as in practice and in practice as in theory, was a revolutionary" and that women's liberation was integral to Marx's theory of revolution. Tracing the views of Marx on Women's Liberation from 1844 to 1883 Dunayevskaya convincingly demonstrates that far from being indifferent to women, Marx considered the man-woman relation as the most fundamental of all relationships and that this concept is of central importance in his total philosophy of revolution....

Dunayevskaya not only delves deep into Marx to bring forth the connection between his views on Women's Liberation and his philosophy of revolution in permanence, she also distinguishes Marx's Marxism from the post-Marx Marxists beginning with Engels himself. The failure of the theoreticians of the WLM lies in their inability to distinguish the revolutionary humanist content in Marx's thought and practice from the post-Marx Marxists who had deviated from Marx and whom they wrongly equate with Marx.

She shows that the views expressed in the *Origin of Family, Private Property and State* differs fundamentally from that of Marx on the question of Women's Liberation. Firstly, "the world historic defeat of the female sex," which according to Engels formed the basis of transition from matriarchy to patriarchy, is no expression of Marx. No defeat of Marx could be a world historic defeat and what was important for him was the lesson learned from defeat so that the next battle could be transformed into a victory.

"Moreover, for Marx, the dialectical development from one stage to another is related to new revolutionary upsurges, whereas Engels sees it as a unilateral progression." The "world historic defeat" which in turn is related to the "primordial division of labour between the sexes" is again no concept of Marx. Even in *The German Ideology* where Marx and Engels are supposed to have put forward the view that the first division of labour was sexual, it was perceived as a social division and not just a personal one. Rather, Marx had shown that the most

fundamental division characterizing all class-societies is the division between mental and manual labour which needed a thorough uprooting in order to establish a classless, casteless, non-sexist, non-racist, truly human society....

It is from the standpoint of the proletariat as a conscious subject struggling to constitute itself as a class that the importance of specifically feminist struggles within the working class can be measured. The acceptance by women of the present situation is a condition for the stability of the capitalist system while struggle against these forms of oppression strike at the roots of the reproduction of capitalist relations of production.

As Marx pointed out in relation to the English and Irish workers, it is inconceivable that the proletariat could overthrow the class-domination of the bourgeoisie unless it has first eliminated all relations of domination and subordination within its own ranks. Another way of putting this is to say that the constitution of the proletariat as a human community is the condition of its revolutionary success.

So long as proletarians collaborate in suppressing the development of capacities of other proletarians, they put obstacles in the way of these others participating in the class-struggle and thus put obstacles towards constituting working-class solidarity. At the same time they dehumanize themselves and thus render themselves less capable of struggling against the dehumanization of bourgeois society. Male chauvinism in the working class is a form in which bourgeois ideology enters the proletariat and dominates it. Dunayevskaya has rightly pointed out that the WLM was born in the mid-1960s against this very male chauvinism, and the unique feature of this movement was that "not only did it come out of the Left but it was directed against it and not from the right but from within the Left itself"....

In so far as the WLM is directed against dehumanized human relationships, domination and for mutual affirmation, it is an integral part of the struggle for socialism, without which the struggle cannot be successful.... Although to specify the forms which human relationships will take in the future society is difficult today, some such attempts will have to be made since it is the task of the communists to anticipate not only in theory but also in practice the relations of a society which has yet to be built.

—Arvind Ghosh

From the Preface

The capitalist order is in the grip of ever-deepening all round crisis—social, economic, political, cultural and moral crisis. The global capitalist economy shows no signs of stabilizing and the crisis is continually deepening in spite of all the newest "recipes."

On the other hand, there is continual and growing resistance of the working people, sporadic rioting by the

youth, local uprisings and powerful militant protests. The desire for freedom is obvious in ever-renewed forms of resistance. As seen during the recent powerful protests of working men and women in France, the history of revolutions are very much in people's minds as exemplified by some placards carried by demonstrators on which was written simply "1871 to 1995"! The aspirations of freedom are there everywhere and yet no new beginnings are being made to advance the revolutionary movements from practice.

An emancipatory vision as an alternative to the capitalist order and its barbarism is not emerging globally even six years after the state capitalist dictatorships collapsed under the blows of repeated working-class revolts and the objective crisis of capitalism.

The resistance of workers, of all oppressed, exploited humanity remains fragmented. A deep sense of confusion, frustration, cynicism, pessimism is very much evident among revolutionary activists, among struggling exploited humanity everywhere. Neither activism for the sake of activism nor "vanguardism" offer any solution.

Particularly when movements from practice are not leading to new beginnings in the revolutionary movement even when the global capitalist order is in ever-deepening all-round crisis, although resistance of exploited humanity against it is going on everywhere, it is particularly necessary to work towards a movement from revolutionary theory, to make new beginnings in revolutionary theory-philosophy which can facilitate, help advance the revolutionary movement.

For that, it is very necessary for all of us to assimilate the highpoints reached by previous social revolutions and revolutionary movements—the revolution of 1917 in Russia, the East European revolts against "statism" (1953-89), the global revolutionary upsurge of the 1960s, the revolutionary uprisings in Chile, Portugal, Iran. It is crucial to develop a total philosophy of revolution for total human liberation. Marx's philosophy of revolution is crucial to the working out of this total philosophy of revolution and therefore it is necessary to rediscover Marx's Marxism for our age.

It is in order to facilitate this process that this small collection is being published, "the red thread" running through which is Marx's total philosophy of revolution. This is a very small part of Raya's work and hopefully it will stimulate interest in the whole body of her theoretical work, especially what she called her trilogy of revolution—Marxism and Freedom; Philosophy and Revolution; and Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution.

Women, especially working women, in every revolution have not only shown that their activity is indispensable to the advance of the revolutionary process, but they have initiated the profoundest social revolution—the Russian Revolution of 1917. The fullest and deepest growth of the Women's Liberation Movement is a condition for and inseparably linked to the fullest growth of the fight of labour to emancipate itself, to all struggles for freedom, to the fight for a classless, stateless society, for total human liberation. And therefore it is a necessary part of the advancement of the revolutionary movement today to recover the concept of "Liberation," which has been pushed to the margins in the Women's Movement, to develop a revolutionary theory of Women's Liberation for our times.

—Nita and Shankar

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PART III
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by Raya Dunayevskaya

"The reason it is so hard to discern a pathway out of the crisis in Bosnia today is not only that the Serbs are on the verge of winning, thanks in large part to the outright complicity of the West. It is also because revolutionaries have forsaken their responsibility to work out the meaning of what comes from below in so comprehensive a theoretic manner that the pathway to a new society can be discerned." (From Part I)

"The difficulty is that post-Marx Marxists were raised not on Marx's Marxism, but on Engelsian Marxism — and that was by no means limited to Engels' *Origin of the Family*. Rather, Engels' unilinearism was organic — which is why we must start from the beginning." (From Part III)

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WILL THE STRUGGLE IN MEXICO ADVANCE?

I was so excited by the April issue of N&L. Mitch Weerth's lead on Mexico seemed to directly illustrate what Raya Dunayevskaya was covering in the Archives page on the Absolute Idea. When Mitch wrote of how a merging of the radical rural poor with the urban working class would pose an even greater threat to the powers that be, it made me think of how when subjectivities get together, the idea of freedom is deepened.

The self-determination of the Idea is what seems to be all around us in many activities we have been attending here in the Bay Area as well. From the strong Latino presence at NOW's "Fight the Right March" a few weeks ago, to the Women in Action meeting where a young Latina from the Comité Emiliano Zapata spoke of creating a vision of a new society, to the welfare lines where women I spoke with aren't buying Farakhan's bourgeois call for "atonement," there is a visible outreach for more than just reacting to today's retrogression.

Sharon Cannery
Bay Area

Mitch Weerth's piece on Mexico ("Will Mexico's Civil War Become Total?", April 1996 N&L) was one of the best pieces I have read on that country's crisis. It made me feel as if I were sitting in Chiapas looking out at the rest of the world. To me it is proof that having a philosophic perspective does not detract from having a "grassroots" view of an unfolding situation.

Latin American solidarity activist
Illinois

I question the headline on your article on Mexico. The Zapatistas are totally surrounded, armed struggle has been contained to the area of Chiapas, and the Left is largely on the defensive throughout Mexico. So where is the "civil war?" If there's one going on, it must be an awfully one-sided one.

F.L.
Indiana

There are many on the Left who criticize the Zapatistas for not having a political program that outlines how the masses can seize power. Maybe there is some reason to be critical of them for allowing themselves to be boxed into a corner by the Mexican government. But maybe their position also represents a consciousness of the need for revolution to assume a new path. Instead of concentrating on seizing power first and then trying to figure out how to create a new society, they are putting the emphasis on creating new forms of democracy and grassroots participation before any change of power. We should look closer at the situation before coming to snap judgments.

Chicano activist
California

When I look at the course taken by revolutions in this country, I cannot help but think that the revolutionaries were not really interesting in changing the relations of power as much as taking power for themselves. You can sound radical by talking "revolution," but it doesn't mean anything if the relation of rulers to ruled isn't changed.

Mexican immigrant
Los Angeles

As far as I can see there is almost a total absence of discussions on Marxism in Latin America nowadays. It sometimes seems futile to even raise the subject. But I see your point that there is a good reason for this which may in the end yield a positive outcome. Revolutions took the wrong path by following a Marxist-Leninist or Stalinist direction, and it is not yet clear there is an alternative pathway. But once an alternative becomes clearly articulated in theory, something new might emerge, because it is very doubtful many will want to repeat the wrong paths taken by revolutions in the past.

Philosophy student
California

The National Commission for Democracy in Mexico-U.S.A. is committed to providing accurate, up-to-date information and analysis in the U.S. regarding the struggle for democracy in Mexico, neoliberalism, the Zapatistas and the

linkages to the struggle for economic, political and social justice in the U.S. Libertad is our vehicle for providing this information to those people who do not have access to the Internet or who wish to receive printed materials in addition to their E-Mail. For subscription information, write to us at:

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THE PLIGHT
OF THE
IMMIGRANT

In response to John Marcotte's excellent "Workshop Talks" column in the April issue: He talks of the immigrants' labor power brought here by capitalism to expand the value of its labor in industries like agriculture, garment, restaurants and health care. Even though they bring their own ideas, skills and special training and are able to find work they usually become underemployed—doctors not being physicians, teachers not teaching and nurses not being able to provide nursing. This is how the capitalist really creates value, getting a lot for a lot less—kind of a double fetish.

Jerry K.
Chicago

What can we say about the times we live in when about a week after the televised beating of immigrants by the Riverside County Sheriff's deputies, 6,000 people protested against it, while the exact same day over 200 people protested to demand criminal prosecution of "illegal immigrants" and sending military forces to guard the border with Mexico. All this happened only hours after a second incident in Temecula, California where this time seven immigrants died. Furthermore, about a week after this demonstration, the ex-chief of police Daryl Gates headed off to a rally in support of the deputies that did the beating.

Unlike Rodney King, today the public support of the police officers and public attacks against immigrants have become very mainstream. Militia groups are threatening to take matters into their own hands by going around checking for green cards and making sure that people do not hire "illegal immigrants." What does it mean that "illegal immigrants" take all kinds of risks, including risking their lives by trying to smuggle into this country for work, and once here are submitted to abuse and exploitation?

Immigrant
Los Angeles

BOSNIA TODAY

I find it rather revealing that whereas the U.S. is having so much trouble identifying and capturing the Serbian militiamen who everyone knows massacred thousands of Bosnians, it has found it easy to discover "evidence" of an "Islamic fundamentalist connection" to the Bosnian government. They are treating reports that Iran shipped a relatively small amount of arms to Bosnia and that 800 soldiers from Iran remain in the country (they never did any actual fighting on the front, by the way) as some major revelation. Could all this be one more way in which the U.S. and NATO is trying to pressure the Bosnians into not saying or doing anything the U.S. might consider "out of line"? We should believe today's lies no more than yesterday's.

Supporter of Bosnia
Chicago

Your insistence that the lesson to be learned from Yugoslavia's collapse is what happens when a liberating alternative to capitalism isn't projected from the Left is right on! I hadn't thought of it exactly in these words, but that's what has been going through my mind for some time. I see it right before me today with Buchanan. He is attacking corporate America at the very time the Left is afraid to come out with a clear alterna-

Readers' Views

tive to capitalism. There are lot of angry people out there, and we have to find new ways to speak to them.

Journalist
Los Angeles

GENDER AND LABOR

To date, the Bloomington, Ill. Pantagraph has printed a dozen letters from Mitsubishi employees decrying the sexual harassment lawsuit against the company. A recurring line goes like: "I've worked here for years, and I've never witnessed any sexual harassment." The plant in question has 4,000 employees. Some who have written letters reside in towns with a smaller population. It would have been as meaningless had they said, "I've lived in this community all my life, and I've never witnessed any spousal abuse."

I work in a factory that is a fraction the size of the Mitsubishi plant. Most of the day, my attention and movement is restricted by the demands of production. Much happens that I haven't the opportunity to witness.

Tesla Coil
Central Illinois

The "protest" march of thousands of Mitsubishi workers reminded me somewhat of the Million Man March. The right people marching for the wrong reasons. Twenty-five years ago there would have been no doubt in my mind that this was a protest in support of the hundreds of women that have accused Mitsubishi of sexual harassment. In fact, when I first heard about it on the news, I assumed that's what they were going to say it was. I felt the same sense of confusion that I initially felt when I heard about the Million Man March, even though the Mitsubishi protest is obviously different. I was appalled by the voices I heard of the women involved in that protest. Where are the voices of reason?

Suzanne Rose
Chicago

FEMINISM
AND THE
BLACK
DIMENSION

In his column, "Two indignant hearts of Black feminism," Lou Turner separates Black feminists who had the "political experiences of the '60s," from those of today's generation who didn't and who, therefore, in his view, are not political. How can an entire generation of today's Black feminists be written off because they didn't live in a certain time? Today's Black feminists have absorbed the consciousness that Black women developed from their experiences of sexism within the movement of the '60s and '70s and have at the same time, and of necessity, been sharp in their critique of the truly "non-political" nature of the Million Man March, for example. Experience of consciousness is not limited to the historic moment one lives in.

As for the phrase, "unenforceable" patriarchal order of the Black community," it serves to erase the power Black men do have over Black women. While the white male establishment is the patriarchy of the U.S., patriarchal relations nevertheless do exist within the Black community. The implication that the Black community operates along the lines of a matriarchy is what Black feminists have had to prove a myth ever since the Moynahan report tried to blame all the problems of the Black community and country on the women. They also fought against the matriarchal myth pushed by Black leftist men.

Sonia Bergonzi
Chicago

The story on the Dept. of Children and Family Services made me think

about the relationship of women to their children. A man can just walk away from his children, but the reality of children's lives pulls on a mother. The concept of love for their children which so many women feel is a rock and foundation for building a new society. We see its manifestation in organizations like Mothers Reclaiming Our Children, women organizing against police and court abuse and injustice. It is a concept of human relationships that demands the creation of something new.

Black activist
Los Angeles

As an African woman who has lived in Poland and is now in Britain, I can tell you that women are oppressed everywhere, be it in Africa, Asia or Europe. An English woman has just discussed with me what both of us see as the suppression of women at work as well as at home by men who see women as objects or as a threat to their own interests, instead of as partners in fighting for freedom and justice in our societies.

Women's Liberationist
England

THE
IDEALISM
OF YOUTH

Even though the April 21 "60 minutes" feature on 13-year-old Canadian human rights activist Craig Keilburger focused on the child prodigy angle, it was thrilling to see how the idea of freedom captivated a youth half a world away from Pakistan, where Iqbal Masih was gunned down at age 12 for his activism against child slavery.

With major legislation to his credit (labels on imported rugs must declare child labor content; firecrackers made by children are now outlawed in Toronto), Keilburger has the makings of a great revolutionary. Unfortunately, the government's efforts to contain him—e.g., the Minister of Foreign Affairs offered him an advisory position—will likely orient him to an unrevolutionary career in politics. For all his astuteness in scoffing at the notion that slavery has been abolished, he may never understand that Iqbal's parents and the company that purchased a four-year-old Iqbal for \$16 are bad actors in a system that punishes good actors more.

David
Oakland

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

I enjoy your publication very much, but am somewhat mystified by the fact that the vast majority of readers' letters, as well as some of the articles, bear no one's real name. Instead, we see bylines like "Caterpillar Worker" and "Boeing Machinist" and signatures like "Radical Intellectual, Wash., D.C." "Supporter, British Columbia" and "African-American activist, Chicago." Is that just a self-perpetuating style that everyone adopts? I can see why workers might be reluctant to reveal their identities for fear of employer retribution. But why are so many radical readers hiding their identities? I would be grateful for an editor's note (if you print this) with an explanation. Until then, in the spirit of current N&L practice,

Curious, proud and unafraid radical
Washington, D.C.

Editor's note: When N&L began in 1955 in the midst of McCarthyism, we used such designations as "White worker" or "Black student" or "Working woman" not only to protect writers but because we found that such designations told far more about who a writer was than "John Smith" or "Mary Doe." We still do, unless the name is well known enough to be meaningful to the readers of N&L or the writer insists on having his/her "real" name published.

IS THE STRIKE STILL A VALID WEAPON?

I read an article in the business section of the L.A. Times that the G.M. strike in March caused a 0.5% drop in U.S. industrial output, but, discounting the strike's broad impact, production grew 0.3%. If 2,700 auto workers that struck G.M. caused a 0.5% drop in U.S. industry, what would happen if 40 million workers went on strike against cuts and takebacks which enrich CEOs who produce nothing?

Retired auto worker
California

A number of striking Detroit newspaper workers come in here, and we sell the Sunday Journal. How is the strike going? I'm glad to hear that there is community support, but Gannett and Knight Ridder [joint owners of the Detroit News and Free Press] are such big companies that it hardly makes a dent in their profits. We need to get support at their other newspapers all over the country. The striking unions and strike supporters have asked readers to boycott USA Today and The Miami Herald.

Pharmacist
Southwest Detroit

I've been drafted onto a government "training program" in information technology. It means that in addition to the usual hassles of living on nothing, I've had to do a five-day a week commuting to East London. The course is run by a TEC ("Training Enterprise Council"), which is given heaps of money to subsidize employers and contract out to training companies, who get paid on the principle of the "New 3 Rs": Recruitment (the firm gets 150 quid a week per trainee for two months); Retention (I couldn't leave); and Results (a piece of paper called a National Vocation Qualification).

A few weeks into my course, signs of rot began to appear: the computer magazines stopped appearing in the tea room; the tea and then the coffee ran out in the machines; the printing paper ran out and wasn't replaced; the badly paid trainers looked depressed; then management announced the firm had gone broke and was closing down. The gov-

ernment could have given us the computers for the money they spent and we could have learned everything we've been taught off the Help menu. The TEC is making arrangements for us to complete the course, so I supposed we'll get our bits of paper, but nobody gives a damn. The whole program is one enormous scam.

Disgruntled
England

The ADM strike in Decatur occurred in the early '80s. Throwing skilled trades out was the issue, and ADM was asking for major concessions. The union there went on strike. Things got heated and ADM brought in scabs on buses. But back in the '80s everyone said, "This doesn't pertain to me." The attitude came back to bite them in the ass. In two and a half years of the Staley struggle, if we succeeded in getting that across to people, we will not consider it a waste. If I can help one person from working on rotational shifts at Staley or anywhere else, it was worth it.

Staley militant
Decatur, Ill.



DEFEND
SARAH
BALABAGAN!

Sarah Balabagan, a teenage Filipina, is scheduled to be released from a United Arab Emirates prison in May. Originally sentenced to die by musketry, in a conviction for stabbing her 58-year-old employer while attempting to fight off his attempt to rape her, she was penalized \$40,000, ordered to serve time and be given 100 lashes (all of which have been consummated).

According to the Filipino Reporter of March 29, she "eyes a career in law" to return the favor given by the lawyers who handled her case—"to fight for those who need legal help." She told the Reporter that there are many Filipina

women, several of them young girls, serving time in her facility, convicted of illegal pregnancy (pregnancy without benefit of marriage), and escaping from their employers. In addition to the stream of world-wide individual supporters, women activists in many parts of the world (including the U.S.) are organizing.

Sheila G.
New York

ISRAEL AND PUNISHMENT

That the government which supposedly represents the whole nation of Israel, can act so stupidly in order to take out the wind of the sail of Mr. Netanyahu and the Likud before the elections is beyond comprehension! Collective punishment did not work in Guernica or Lidice, and will definitely not work on the West Bank or Gaza. It will just get new converts to terrorism.

Holocaust survivor
East Europe

Israeli Prime Minister Peres may think he is showing the world he is his "own man" in launching his bloody attacks on Lebanon. In fact, it only shows he is following in the mold established by Menachem Begin and Ariel Sharon. He is a kept man, imprisoned by the failed policies of the past.

Subscriber
Illinois

In the aftermath of the bombing in Oklahoma, for days the news was full of an "Islamic-fundamentalist-foreign conspiracy." A few days later, it turned out that it was the work of some homegrown, right-wing fundamentalist fanatics. Is it possible that behind the hysteria whipped up after attributing the bombings in Israel to Hamas that they were actually committed by the same kind of homegrown, Israeli fundamentalist zealots who committed the massacre in Hebron a year ago and who recently killed Itzhak Rabin in order to sabotage his peace initiative? Or is it just a sad coincidence that the goal of the fanatics of Hamas and the Jewish funda-

mentalist zealots is the same, while the Palestinians end up being persecuted and quarantined behind a new, eventually electrified iron curtain?

Correspondent
Vancouver

A NOTE ON HAITI

Concerning Lou Turner's article on Haiti in the January-February issue: I was in Cite Soleil when the clashes between the police and what he referred to as the "Red Army" underground group occurred. I was close enough to see the guns and a national police member get shot in the arm. After speaking with many people both that afternoon and the next day, the story that emerged was very different from what you've been led to believe. The gun battle I saw was between the national police and a group of well-armed men identified by almost all I spoke with as Macoutes [right-wing death squads]. Many people theorize that the so-called "Red Army" is really the hired guns of the Macoutes. I was told that "Red Army" is not a name a Haitian would pick, even if they were socialist.

Lynn
California

CROMWELL'S REPUBLICANISM

I'm afraid Dave Black, in his essay article in N&L a few months ago, has his history of Cromwell and republicanism wrong. The Calvinist conception of republicanism held in the 16th and 17th centuries was far from being about democracy. Cromwell and "the Commonwealth men" were in the difficult position that their theology predisposed them to be monarchists. It is why many former Parliamentarians rallied to the Crown during the Civil War and why the Presbyterians and Independents then fell out and fought a second civil war. To them, Republic meant aristocratic republic, and though that was indeed just what it was, they had to find a different term.

Laurens Otter
England

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Black/Red View

by John Alan

May 18 will be the 100th anniversary of the United States Supreme Court's Plessy v. Ferguson decision, the "separate but equal" doctrine regulating race relations in the United States. In practice the doctrine placed its emphasis on "separate" and nothing on "equal."

In 1953, the Warren Supreme Court reversed itself by ruling in the Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas case that "separate but equal is inherently unequal." But eventually it took the mass action of African Americans to root out the most flagrant and subtle forms of racial segregation, the most historic action being the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott.

The "separate but equal" doctrine originated in a case brought to the Supreme Court in 1896 by Homer Plessy, a man of African-American descent. Plessy contended that his arrest for ignoring the Louisiana state law that mandated separate train coaches for Blacks and whites was a violation of his rights protected by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. The Court ruled against Plessy and thus gave an aura of Constitutional authority to the racist terror raging through the South.

Two worlds of race still exist in the U.S. and they still stand in opposition to each other. Liberals and quasi-radicals are offering various theoretical ways to prevent another explosion like South Central Los Angeles. One of them is to go beyond racial identity politics to a multicultural democracy, as if a multicultural democracy could be created within America's historically existing conditions of racism by people of good will. Or, in other words, racism can be transcended in the objective world by ignoring the racial identity of the subject engaged in the battle to transcend the two worlds of race.

It is precisely the identity of the subject that contains the will to transcend. As Raya Dunayevskaya, the Marxist-Humanist philosopher, states: "It is clear that for the Black masses, Black consciousness, awareness of themselves as Afro-American with a dual history and a special

Black World

(continued from page 1)

Sierra Leone, the entrenchment of the military junta of Gen. Sani Abacha in Nigeria, and the instability throughout the West African region have not exactly mobilized the "moral imperatives" of U.S. foreign policy.

On the contrary, considering the U.S. defeat in Somalia, its indifference to unthinkable genocide in Rwanda, and its bowing to the capitalist interests of Western oil corporations by turning a blind eye to the military thugery in Nigeria, there is no reason to expect U.S. policy on Liberia to be governed by anything other than imperialist expediency.

As in the case of the Bosnian Serb warlords who had to be legitimized by the U.S. and NATO in order to do the bloody business of partitioning Bosnia and writing off the genocide of Bosnia's multiethnic population, so Liberia's warlords, whose forces have massacred hundreds of thousands of Liberians, have been made into respectable heads of state (sic).

Regardless of the events that are thought to be the immediate cause of the present round of fighting, there are two totally opposite conditions that together constitute the proximate ground whence the present crisis arose.

First, an April 1 target date had been set for the return to civil rule, the turning over of faction-held territory and security duties to the ECOMOG peacekeepers, and the disarming of military factions, especially the cadres of armed youth. This threatened to immediately diminish the armed power of the faction leaders. Fighting ensued a week later.

However, unlike the situation six years ago when Charles Taylor's forces invaded Liberia, with the backing of Libya's Qaddafi, to overthrow the regime of Samuel Doe, a widespread public and organized resistance to the armed terror imposed on Liberian society had developed. On Feb. 15, a massive one day general strike, called by the Inter-Faith Mediation Committee of Christian and Muslim leaders, the Liberian Women's Initiative and the Council of Chiefs succeeded in closing down government offices, schools, shops and street markets; taxi drivers and public transport workers shut down most means of travel; and newspapers suspended publication, while radio stations refused to broadcast.

But even as this unprecedented, one day strike for peace expressed the depth of Liberian civil society's desire for disarmament and a return to civil, democratic rule, the existence of a very different condition produced by the six year civil war represents the most serious obstacle to peace. Like the Sudan, Uganda, and Somalia, Liberia must address the question of the fate of its young fighters in a postmilitary society. Pressed into military service with no more political education than the capricious factionalism of military leaders like Taylor and Johnson, the fate of these Liberian youth under arms has been swept under the carpet by almost every party.

Far from the coalition Council of State showing any interest in the education of these armed youth in the ranks of their military factions, they are doing everything to hold onto their loyalties by reinforcing their legitimacy as "liberation forces." The concerns of the warring collective leadership of the Council of State are the spoils of humanitarian aid, instead of the revolutionary rehabilitation of society, beginning with its youth. It is this question of youth and revolution that has become crucial, not alone in Liberia, but as the most fundamental question of our changed world.

Still separate, unequal 100 years after Plessy

pride, is a drive toward wholeness. Far from being a separation from the objective, it means an end to the separation between the objective and the subjective."

Black race identity remains a powerful force in American civilization because that identity has a dimension of negativity that pushes for the creation of a new kind of society based on totally new human relations. Abandonment of identity of the subject keeps the struggle within the necessity of political tactics. Thus, in California some in the movement against the repeal of affirmative action have decided to de-emphasize the issue of race in order to take the advantage away from conservatives.

When the U.S. Supreme Court handed down the Plessy decision in 1896, the post-Reconstruction counter-revolution had, in the words of African-American historian Rayford W. Logan, "dimmed the bright promise of the Emancipation Proclamation. The high hope of the reconstruction era ended by the sharp blows of race hatred." He could have also added that the Jim Crow system, the disenfranchisement, and lynching terror created the first modern African-American movement against racism and produced the first two major modern Black leaders, W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington.

DuBois wanted full African-American equality with white Americans and their integration in the American society. Washington wanted parallel separate Black eco-

The killing of Ebrahima Sey

London—Saturday, March 16 will always stay in our memories, as it marked another police murder in Britain: this time a Gambian brother, a young man called Ebrahima Sey, a husband and father of two.

Ebrahima was arrested by Forest Gate police officers after a domestic dispute. During the arrest he wasn't violent. He walked freely into the police van without causing any trouble. One of his friends, Pa Ndimbalan, an eyewitness to the arrest, said he wanted to go to where the police were taking him and they accepted.

At their arrival to Ilford police station almost 20 police officers came out of the station to get Ebrahima inside. They rushed him down, strangled him, but he was still talking to his friend, "Pa, do you see what they are doing to me?" After that the police screened Pa, the witness, and asked him to leave.

Pa went outside and waited for five hours. He was called by a senior officer inside the police station and was told that Ebrahima was dead. A Scotland Yard officer called the media and told them that someone in police custody just died in King George Hospital that morning without even contacting Ebrahima's family.

According to what had been said by the police to the media, CS gas had been used and Ebrahima was suffering from a heart condition. But the family said that Ebrahima was a footballer, a very healthy man.

Ebrahima's older brother went to see the body and he took photos of him. His lower lip was cut and he had bruises on his forehead. He is sure that his younger brother had been tortured, beaten to death by the police.

There were two demonstrations held at Forest Gate police station to show how angry the whole Black community was, that another young man had died in police hands again, the fifth within a year. The demonstrations were attended by a cross section of Gambians who gave up one day's pay to give the family their support.

This is the right time to fight for cases like this, for the Black and Asian community to feel safe in this country. Many Black people have been killed and it won't stop until justice is done.

—Gambian journalist

nomie development in mutual relationship with capitalism. This is the essential core of the two opposing theories of Black liberation and both have remained a constant in Black leadership thinking, even though at times of crises both theories have been seriously challenged.

However the sudden birth of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s owed nothing to these two theories. Rosa Parks—defying segregation by refusing to give her bus seat to a white man in Montgomery in 1955—got her impulse to act from the historic ongoing opposition of African-American masses to racial oppression and because her impulse was universal, it ignited a new mass movement. But that movement lacked its own real philosophical/theoretical dimension. Thus, even though it regained the Civil Rights taken away in 1890s, it never reached its full development by going beyond the struggle for political rights to absolute human rights.

Dr. King alluded to the necessity to do this in some of his speeches, but his inherent feeling for a new human society never became the theoretic/active goal of the movement. And it was precisely there where it fell apart and factionalized itself. Recognizing this as the stopping point of the movement is neither hostile nor idle criticizing, but a recognition that the consequences of an unfinished revolution in past history shows itself at first as a return to a reactionary past. This has become the most obvious movement in America today. But there still remains considerable opposition to this present reactionary trend. The crucial need is still to find the road to the future philosophically/theoretically and actively in spite of the road blocks erected by racism.

NYC Racial Justice Day

New York—"Racial Justice Day," March 28, brought out hundreds of young Blacks, Latinos, Asians and whites to protest police brutality. In a loud challenge to Mayor Giuliani's pro-police and anti-youth policies, the demonstration began at City Hall to demand action be taken against the policemen who have recently killed young people. The protest was sponsored by Parents Against Police Brutality and an unusual coalition of Black, Latino, Asian and Left organizations and gangs. Veteran demonstrators were greatly outnumbered by the teen-age crowd. Some white college students also came.

There were heart-breaking speeches by parents of children who had been killed. Iris Baez said her son Anthony was killed "for playing football in front of our house." She added, "We have to fight or all our children and grandchildren will be killed. This is a fight to the end."

Another parent described his sit-in at the Brooklyn D.A.'s office to insist they indict two cops who shot a Puerto Rican and a Chinese youth in their backs. One speaker attributed the rash of official violence against youth to an attempt to criminalize all young people of color. He said 98,000 arrests of young people had been made in the last year during the mayor's "quality of life" sweeps of the streets.

Many gang members called for unity among the ethnic groups there. One speaker from a gang said that the corporations and the system are the real problem, and the police only serve them.

There was a march and a second rally at Thompson Square Park. The police turn-out was huge, with police lining the march every two feet, and motorcycles and paddy wagons ready. We went through Chinatown and past housing projects on the Lower East Side, calling for people to join. The march swelled to at least 2,000 people, and those we passed shouted support. —Participant

In memoriam: Johnny Zupan

The sad news of the death of John Zupan on April 14 sent our thoughts back over four decades to the important role he had played in the birth of Marxist-Humanism at the time of the Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and of News and Letters Committees a few years later. For Johnny Zupan was the white skilled auto worker who in 1955, co-edited the first issues of *News & Letters* with Charles Denby—the Black production worker who, once Zupan stepped down later that year, took over the full responsibility of editorship until his death in 1983. With Raya Dunayevskaya as chairwoman of the National Editorial Board, the practice of "worker as editor" manifested the unique kind of unity of workers and intellectuals that N&L was founded to help work out.

Its concept had its roots in the new ways of thinking—for both workers and revolutionary intellectuals—that came out of the 1949-50 Miners' General Strike. As Raya Dunayevskaya put it in telling its story many years later,* that event "seemed to touch, at one and the same time, a concept Marx had designated as alienated labor and the absolute opposite to it, which Marx had spelled out as the end of the division between mental and manual labor... It led me to conclude that two new vantage points were needed for the book I had been working on, titled 'State-Capitalism and Marxism.' One was that the American worker should become a point of departure not only as 'root' of Marxism but as a presence today. I therefore proposed that a worker be present at future discussions of the drafts of the book." The worker who was invited to that next discussion was Johnny Zupan.

The second vantage point proposed for the book that later became *Marxism and Freedom* concerned the way in which Lenin's study of Hegel concentrated on the

Doctrine of the Notion, over either Being or Essence. At the discussion to which Zupan had been invited—where the Doctrine of the Notion was explained as "the subjective as well as the objective paths to liberation"—he expressed what it meant to him, as a worker. "When you don't have a notion of the future, you just counter-pose essence to form. Is that what all this means?" he asked, seeing "essence" as the class struggle, and "form" as the form of the union contract. "Clearly," Raya continued the story, "the worker's presence went a great deal further than 'the class question' (to) grappling with the relationship of subjective to objective."

Johnny Zupan will rightly be remembered for his long decades of labor struggles—from the year he joined the International Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers in 1941; through the 1940s in the UAW at the Ford Highland Park plant, where he edited the union paper; to his presidency of AFSCME local 1497 when he worked at Wayne State University in the 1970s. He will surely be remembered for the highpoint of those labor struggles, when he was the organizer of the Detroit city-wide union drive that resulted in sending seven trailer trucks full of food and clothing to Appalachia—a caravan that helped the coal miners, after nine months of struggle, turn the tide in their historic 1949-50 strike.

But, most of all, he will be remembered by Marxist-Humanists for the part he played at that point in what Raya called "the emergence of a new movement from practice that is itself a form of theory" and in the birth of Marxist-Humanism that followed. We mourn his death and honor his memory.

—Olga Domanski

*The full story is told in the *News & Letters* pamphlet, *The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.* (To order, see page 7.)

New voices of opposition to prison warehousing of the poor

(continued from page 1)

rhetoric and represents an eruption into public speech of the kind of sadistic pornography that was once confined to the Ku Klux Klan or Nazi literature passed around in Mississippi or Chicago's Marquette Park.

DISGUISED THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM

In light of the fantastic increase in the number of prisons and prisoners in the last few decades, which in no way reflects a proportionate rise in the rate of crime, it isn't far-fetched to see the rapid growth of the prison population as a direct response to the sort of threat to the system represented by the Los Angeles Rebellion. At its core is a militant racism.

The figures are staggering. The population of state and federal prisons dropped during the 1960s, and in 1970 stood at 196,429. Through the 1970s this number rose, and in 1980 stood at 315,974. The really incredible increases have, however, come in the politically retrogressive '80s and '90s. Today there are over 1,150,938 held in prison in this country, more than anywhere else in the world.

This imprisonment binge has fallen heaviest on young Black men. According to a 1995 study by The Sentencing Project, one in three young Black men between the ages of 20 and 29 is under the supervision of the criminal justice system—either in prison or on probation or parole. Blacks, who only make up about 12% of the population, make up over half of all prison admissions.

This disparity holds true whether looking at the rate of imprisonment for drug offenses, where it is acknowledged that while most users are white most of those imprisoned are Black, or at the new phenomena of "three strikes, you're out" laws pioneered once again in California. A study by the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice found that while Blacks only make up about 7% of California's population, they account for 43% of those sentenced under the "three strikes" law. Eighty-five percent of all those incarcerated under these laws were charged with a nonviolent third offense which could as well have been treated as a misdemeanor—such as the infamous life term given one man for stealing a slice of pizza.

The forms of imprisonment are also becoming more brutal. For instance, there is the proliferation of Control Unit prisons, rightly described as torture dungeons where every effort is made to break the prisoners' will, both physical and psychological. Here the system hopes to "disappear" people as into the gulag.

The chain gang has also been brought back in a number of states. Here is how Brent Staples in *The New York Times Magazine* described this: "Many Alabamans delight in the chain gangs' reappearance. Drivers roll down their windows to taunt the prisoners, barking like dogs. Others look on the predominantly Black gangs and feel nostalgia for the South they knew as children. 'I love seeing 'em in chains,' one elderly white woman said. 'They ought to make them pick cotton.'" (Sept. 17, 1995)

In fact, prisoners are made to do many different jobs, as low or no-pay prison labor is now used by companies from JC Penney to Microsoft. Whatever hot air is blown about how this trains people for the work force, the truth is that it is meant to prop up a crisis-ridden capitalist economy that simply can't provide jobs at decent pay. The current number of incarcerated amounts to 2% of the entire labor force.

SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES, TO EACH OTHER

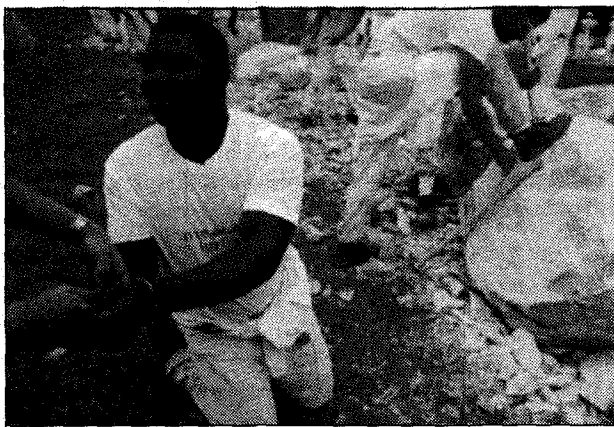
As the segment of society upon whom the current social crisis falls most heavily, it is to be expected that those in prison are compelled to look for an understanding of the situation they are in as a prelude to changing it. One way this can be seen is in the response that has been received to a questionnaire drawn up by prisoners, who asked N&L to help get it circulated to others. It consisted of 17 questions concerning different aspects of prison life.

The depth of insight shown about the true nature of the guardians of "Law and Order" was shown in the way so many identified racism and the mercenary nature of the prison system as central to their incarceration. One inmate from Kansas said that the greatest obstacle to positive change in the system is the "mentality of the so-called correctional experts...who have not openly declared it, but espouse it quietly, that prisons, prisoners, crime and more of it are big business and huge money makers...Such business has job security for hundreds, even thousands in each state, and any changes in the manner of their operations, ideals and cries of crime might lessen profits...They are not law-followers, but only greedy profiteers on the lives of others."

This pretty well sums up the debates around prison labor, which has inmates toiling at slavery-like non-wages as part of an effort to drive down all wages. It is a voice that needs to be heard by organized labor because of the rise of powerful prison guard unions which are masquerading as a legitimate part of the labor movement.

One thing on which the prisoners themselves were unanimous was that any positive changes in their situation must be the result of organization both within and without the prisons. As a woman prisoner put it, "It would take a large group of prisoners, which is hard to accomplish, especially on a women's yard because they are already so suppressed, and are greatly afraid of repercussion, or harassment. Support from society is mandatory."

There are instances in which this organizing has begun. It is seen in community organizations like Mothers Reclaiming Our Children and the L.A. 4+ Committee that were formed in the wake of the Los Angeles Rebel-



Return of chain-gang labor in Alabama.

lion by people refusing to allow the courts and police to dehumanize their loved ones and their community. These organizations remain active around such issues.

It is also seen in the efforts at a gang truce also born in Los Angeles. There are ongoing efforts to cement a truce between the Bloods and Crips, but also between Black and Latino youth gangs who are thrown together in crowded conditions in L.A. County Jail. At an April 27 gang truce rally in Los Angeles, one Latino youth said, "The events that we are participating in today have world repercussions. The gang truce here impacted events in Rio de Janeiro by helping to create a gang truce there."

Students at the University of California at Santa Cruz have initiated another front, by protesting the way the state is spending money on prisons (a billion dollars a year) while slashing funding for education. Students there are waging a hunger strike over this issue, and recently invited speakers from the California Coalition of Women Prisoners to speak to a rally.

One former prisoner at the rally said, "I have various thoughts about captives and how they are seen by the captors. It seems that every rule and every attitude was designed to make me feel diminished and inferior—morally inferior to the rest of the world. I think my captors really believe that prisoners are not quite human, that we already had to have been criminal types before getting to prison. My own experience was one of battling that underlying sense of futility that comes from facing the obvious contempt every moment of every day."

Such dialogue among prisoners shows the beginning of an effort to organize their own thoughts in opposition to the prison system—and also to that voice within that says (in the words of one former prisoner) "don't believe in anyone, don't pay attention, everyone here is just trying to get over one way or another." This is the whisper of all the world's hopelessness and oppression of spirit which is stronger than armies in defense of the status quo.

Of central importance, too, has been the struggle for

VOICES FROM WITHIN THE PRISON WALLS

by D.A. Sheldon

On Feb. 26, 1996, two Latino prisoners at the Iowa Medical Classification Center (IMCC) in Coralville, Iowa, destroyed \$12,000 worth of state property while holding off numerous guards during a two-and-a-half-hour mini-riot.

At approximately 10:15 p.m., a guard making security rounds in LU-B (a newly established lock-up unit that warehouses 60 prisoners) caught two Mexican prisoners, Jorge Borges, 21 and Sam Cheatham, 18, smoking in their cell. The guard then called A/B control center by hand radio requesting cell B-9 be unlocked. He then ordered the two occupants of the cell to go to the day area on the first floor of the unit. A short scuffle broke out between the prisoners and the guard.

Eventually the guard was knocked unconscious, and the prisoners fled to the recreation day area. A few minutes later eight guards rushed into the unit, but were immediately chased out. The prisoners then barricaded the emergency and entryway doors to the unit, and thereafter started to trash the unit.

An hour-and-a-half into the rebellion an emergency response team (CERT) guard pumped gas into the unit. This gas also affected those prisoners who were locked into cells surrounding the unit, even forcing some to use wet cloths in order to breathe.

Ten minutes later 20 CERT guards called in from different institutions throughout the state, tried to enter the unit, but again were chased out. For another 30 minutes more gas was pumped into the unit, this time forc-

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the lives and freedom of prisoners like Mumia Abu-Jamal, the former Black Panther and MOVE supporter whose case has had worldwide support, and Manuel Salazar in Illinois, a young Mexican-American who has had great support in Chicago's Latino community. Although much more needs to be done, the refusal to allow these accused so-called "cop-killers" to be railroaded despite the intense hostility of police organizations shows that the struggle can be waged.

The importance of hearing the voices of these lower and deeper levels of society can be seen by the way the massive prison rebellion which broke out after the Million Man March last October exposed the hollow rhetoric of the "leaders" on the speakers' platform. There was a lot of talk (and truth) by Jesse Jackson and others about the gross injustice of the cocaine sentencing laws in giving out higher penalties for crack than for powder cocaine, which fell disproportionately on poor and Black users, and the March surely emboldened prisoners. Yet there was no attempt to positively relate the two. Jackson in fact asked the prisoners to end the rebellion in the name of the Million Man March.

At its height the rebellion included five federal prisons which were out of the authorities' control. In this case it was the prisoners with their determination to change their conditions of life who exposed the leaders' words as simply an attempt to use and deceive the masses' social consciousness.

IMPRISONED MIND OF WHITE AMERICA

It almost goes without saying that these struggles should be differentiated from the so-called anti-government, anti-law enforcement agency stance of the white militias. Four years later, the Los Angeles Rebellion still haunts the ruling class of this country, but only one year after the bombing in Oklahoma City it is clear from the kid gloves treatment of the Montana Freemen that the government has reached an accommodation with these neo-fascist militias. The unprecedented "legal" assault on Black America shows that the government has no deep-seated aversion to the militias' hatred of the Constitutional Amendments which granted citizenship to the former Black slaves.

Further, the racist ideological core of these militia groups (Aryan Nations, and so on) reflects very well the internal divide-and-conquer politics inside prison, and their current growing popularity in white America shows nothing more than the dire lack of spiritual freedom that prevails there.

When the Los Angeles Rebellion issued its ringing challenge to the established order and showed the existence of a new social consciousness, it called forth vicious repression which might seem to be triumphant in today's political landscape. But this only emphasizes the importance of confronting this reality with a philosophy of liberation which can both hear the voices from below and help them to recognize themselves in the Idea of freedom that breaks down all prison walls.

Iowa prisoners mini-rebellion

ing the two prisoners to retreat to the top tier.

Seeing that both prisoners were unarmed the entire CERT team stormed the unit, and told the prisoners to lie flat on the floor. These guards then jumped on their backs, sprayed pepper mace in their faces while handcuffing both legs and arms, and dragged them to the maximum lock up.

As usual the mainstream press only told the prisonrats' side of the story. Guards had been continually harassing prisoners on the unit, and because of the buildup of frustration something was bound to happen. Also, the unit was overcrowded with prisoners sleeping on bunks placed out in the day area, thus increasing the tension within the closed environment.

The guard involved in the melee had been intimidating one of the Latino prisoners for over a month, and prisonrats ignored the request that criminal assault charges be brought forth. In retaliation the prisonrats placed both Latino prisoners in strip cell status for four days, denying them bedding, clothing, toilet paper and other hygiene supplies. They were fed foodloaf and the water to their sink and toilet was shut off.

The request by the Latino prisoners for a shower, to wash the mace off, and medical care for injuries sustained during the riot and the events thereafter were satistically refused. Furthermore, the prison disciplinary committee (kangaroo court) sentenced each prisoner to humongous sanctions of one year disciplinary detention followed by another year in administrative segregation, a loss of all earned good time credit and restitution in the amount of \$6,000. The prisonrats also filed a battery of criminal charges against the prisoners seeking a total of 25 years consecutive added to their current sentence. Neither defendant has been appointed requested counsel. The prisoners now reside at the long-term isolation unit (cellhouse 220) in the Iowa state penitentiary in Fort Madison, Iowa.

These excessively inhumane penalties were also used by prisonrats to instill fear into those prisoners who thought of rebelling against the system, thus keeping oppressive control of the prison class. Though this event was not planned, and the prisoners were serving short sentences with a possibility of parole this year, these defensive actions by two oppressed Latino prisoners was truly upstanding.

Opposition mounts against abuse of immigrants

The immigrant war

New York—Thousands rallied around the country April 6 to protest growing racist discrimination against the so-called illegal immigrants. Signs reading "No immigrant is illegal," "Immigrants yes, migra no," "No to the police brutality against immigrant workers," and "No to H.R. 2202" were present in demonstrations in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York and 11 other cities.

Campana 96, a movement that encompasses immigrant workers, human rights, religious and political organizations, initiated these rallies which will culminate in a march in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 12th. Organizers are expecting no less than half a million people.

These demonstrations show the anger of the U.S. immigrant community toward the fascist policies of the government and opportunist politicians. H.R. 2202 for example, would allow states to bar undocumented children from public education and to cut social benefits to "legal" immigrants. But they also show anger at the April 1 brutal beating of two Mexican workers, Alicia Sotero and Enrique Funes, by Riverside County, Cal., sheriff's deputies and at the killings, one week later, of another seven immigrant workers in a car accident near San Diego after being chased by the police. Both barbaric acts were captured on videotape and watched all over the world, like the 1992 beating of Rodney King by the LAPD officers, the seed of the Los Angeles Rebellion.

The racist repression against immigrant workers has to do with today's machinery of federal law enforcement, the biggest that ever existed in this country. Despite Clinton's declaration that "the era of big government is over," the amount of money for federal law enforcement doubled over the last three years as did the number of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agents.

The media has also helped prepare fertile ground for chauvinist ideologies, as in the constant repetition in the media of Pat Buchanan's references of Mexicans as "Joes" and the lack of condemnation of these racist remarks.

Democrats have joined forces with Republicans in this war. After the beatings, California Sen. Barbara Boxer proposed to triple the number of border patrol agents.

On the other side of the Rio Bravo, the hypocritical Mexican president, Ernesto Zedillo, urged the U.S. to stop these brutal attacks. Meanwhile, rural workers are massacred regularly in southern Mexico.

Today's anti-immigrant mood has to do with the fact that capitalism is in crisis all over the world. "Illegal" immigration cannot be stopped in these days of capitalist devastation, not even "with a wall that reaches the sky," a Mexican worker said after hearing of Dole's and Buchanan's proposal of "walling" the border. The spirit of rebellion that emerged in 1992 in Los Angeles is alive. On Oct. 12, march on Washington, D.C.!

—Carlos Varela

Beatings spark outrage

Los Angeles—In late March, the Spanish language newspaper *La Opinion* carried an article announcing a march in defense of immigrants, from La Placita to the Federal Building. The organizers, Coordinadora '96, stressed that the short distance of five blocks was to facilitate participation. Yet the organizers did not initially expect much.

At 11 a.m. on April 1, the now all too familiar police beating of a Mexican man and woman in Riverside occurred, and the whole perspective changed. What had been a third page article now appeared on page one. In response, the march was rerouted and extended to eight blocks. The local media gave voice to local politicians condemning the beating and asking people to come.

New energy, anger in UFW

Watsonville, Cal.—This working-class, farming town was the scene for a United Farm Workers' (UFW) march on April 21, with over 3,000 participants. Shouting "Chavez Si! Wilson No!" against the state's racist governor, the march wound its way three miles through town with enthusiastic support from local residents.

The rally and march were held to commemorate Chavez on the third anniversary of his death, and more urgently, in support of farm workers at various local companies who are trying to unionize and negotiate fair contracts. Many workers came with banners identifying the companies for which they work, most of them in the strawberry industry.

Other farm laborers already with the UFW came not only to support the effort, but to share their experiences of organizing in the fields. Workers from other professions, including teachers and Teamsters, came from as far away as Los Angeles and the Central Valley.

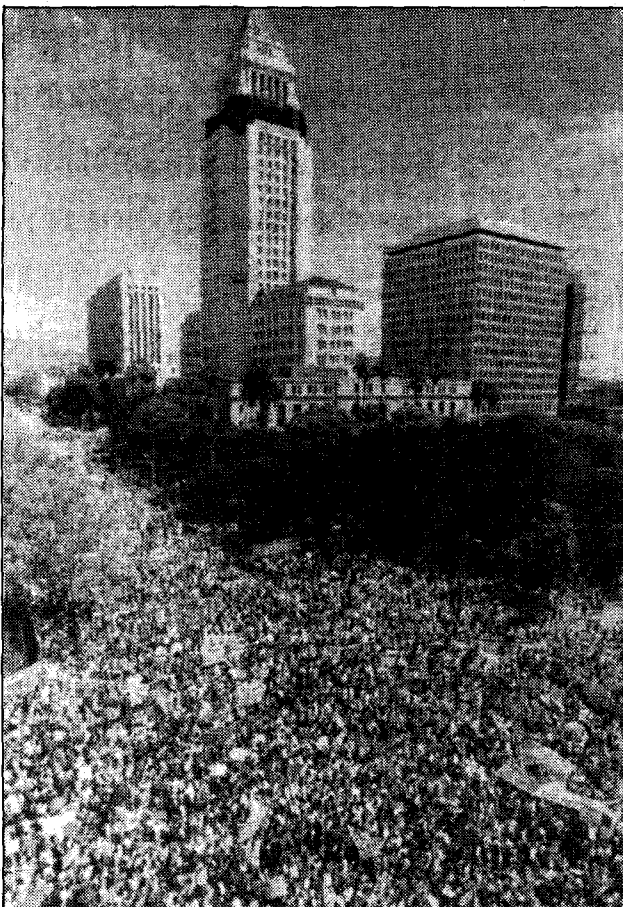
A 53-year old Chicano worker analyzed what is at stake: "I've been working here in the Pajaro Valley for fifteen years, in the lettuce fields. The company I work for is the only one in the area that is unionized. The rest have kept the UFW out by using contractors from Salinas to hire the workers. This is how they take less and less responsibility for their workers. The workers, we don't expect to get rich—I'm making only \$6.90 an hour after all these years—but in the U.S. it's not possible to care for a family without medical insurance. That's something we want through the contract."

"All the problems you see in the streets and the cities are here, too. We can see the limits to civil rights in this country as easily in the fields as when the immigrants got beat up by the cops in Southern California."

—Participants

Mexican Consulate Jose Angel Pescador extracted the most benefit out of the tragedy. Within 24 hours Pescador took center stage and control by obtaining the lawyers who were able to get the immigrants freed, and got the INS to grant them working permits for six months on the day just prior to the march.

This unexpected blessing did not catch the march organizers completely by surprise as they were able to use the local media to regain the center of attention by the day of the march. People began to gather at 10 a.m. for the march at 11. The outpouring of people from many



Los Angeles immigrant rights rally April 6.

different tendencies seemed to worry the organizers, and the PA system began to deliver messages about good behavior, respect for the system, love of democracy, and most of all, "Please, this is a decent march, do not pay attention to the agents provocateurs."

The people were questioning the leaders of the event in a way that gave me and many others a strange but most pleasant feeling. Because the speakers' addresses were being ignored by much of the crowd, many of us began to form small clusters and to talk among ourselves.

The two beating incidents sparked a series of commentaries in the opinion pages of the local newspapers. One of the most striking statements was from a victim in the second beating, recorded while still in his hospital bed: "Even if I am not totally well, as soon as I get out of the

hospital I will attempt to cross the border again. The conditions in Mexico are so bad that there is no hope."

What had initially been expressions of appreciation for Pescador turned into condemnations of him and the government that he represents. This shift showed a polarization of the extreme Left and the extreme Right with a changed center. After seeing the extremes express themselves, I ask myself, will philosophy be able to meet the challenge and will this small dim light of hope grow?

—Antonio

The humanist response to Oklahoma bombing

Oklahoma City—April 19 was the one-year anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing. Living only 20 miles from the Oklahoma City Federal Building, we will never forget. Nor should we. The terrorists who committed this inhuman act will never forget either.

Out of all the horror, I personally saw the most humanism I have ever experienced. People from every walk of life gave of themselves to help those who they may never know or see again. It didn't have any stigma such as race, religion, sex or so on. If only we'd act this human all the time, what a different society we'd truly be!

In the faces of death and fear, Oklahoma City and the nation showed terrorism that instead of tearing apart and destroying, people came together as never before. If you have seen the new Garth Brooks video, the pictures show the whole story—the faces of the bombing victims and mass confusion, the faces of the rescuers, driven by pure desire to save. I think the best reminder, which will never be erased from my mind, is the picture of Bailey Allmen, her little lifeless body laid in a fireman's arms.

All the unsung heroes did so much, not for glory or fame but to show true humanism. There was a young man who gave one year's salary to help start a survivors' fund; a doctor I know who lost a family member in the bombing, saved a bombing victim's leg from amputation and would not accept payment for his services; federal workers elsewhere who gave their vacation and sick time to victims' family members and survivors who had no more paid leave time; and pilgrims who still go to the bomb site and leave a piece of their hearts—letters, poems, flowers, stuffed animals, even T-shirts.

It has given me a real sense that there is a great chance for the humanism that capitalism can't destroy. I agree we need to change this capitalist system. But terrorists and the far Right are not the answer. They will only try and control us more. None of the people in the Oklahoma City bombing had any more control over the system than the bombers. They were people who had to struggle to make ends meet, just like the rest of us. What a waste of human life. And the children, the ones who can change the future—why them? Because their parents had to go to work! Was that their crime?

Oklahoma City will never be the same, but I hope it has opened the world's eyes as to what a new society built on humanism could be.

—Working woman

Editorial

The simmering East Asian cauldron

the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere.

What lies unstated in any new U.S.-Japan military cooperation is China, the country Clinton has not visited. As powerful as the army has been since Mao Zedong accorded it a place alongside the Communist Party, then used the army both to begin the Cultural Revolution and to end it, the army has never been stronger.

As guarantor of the present government after it crushed students and workers in Tiananmen Square and elsewhere in the 1989 movement for freedom and democracy, the army's position is central in the death-watch on Deng Xiaoping and maneuvering to succeed him. The army even can finance an arms buildup beyond the state budget, from profits of army-owned factories.

Yeltsin made his own election-year trip to Beijing, exchanging his endorsement of China's claim on Tibet for being able to claim he had persuaded Jiang Zemin to sign a nuclear test ban treaty this fall. China showed a willingness to play the Russia card to counter the U.S. doubling down on the Japan card. How this will play out we will see, but it sounded like the army talking when China backed away from the nuclear test ban, claiming the need to develop nuclear missiles to deflect asteroids headed for earth impact—the same threat Jesse Helms uses to try to prolong Star Wars spending.

China may have grossly overestimated separatist sentiments in Taiwan, because a growing section of capitalists are investing more in mainland China than anybody but Hong Kong and have their interests tied to closer relations with China. China's show of military might during Taiwan's elections may not have been wasted if it was intended to send a message to the rest of its Asian neighbors.

Clinton's "get-tough" policy toward China right now is framed not against imprisonment of dissidents or prison-made exports or exports from army-owned factories, but against copyright infringement. That sets the stage for China to crack down on pirated compact discs and Clinton to renew China's most-favored-nation status.

More seriously for the long run is the escalating arms buildup all around the Pacific Rim. Security arrangements are built on sand as long as the capitalist drive for domination is allowed to continue.

Two election-year trips to East Asia in late April — Bill Clinton's stops in South Korea and Japan en route to the G-7 meeting in Russia, and Boris Yeltsin's trip to Beijing — spotlight lines that still mark the bipolar world years after the end of the Soviet Union. Clinton arrived in Tokyo to extend the U.S.-Japan security alliance just as North Korea was publicly denouncing the 1953 Armistice and symbolically disregarding UN rules in the Demilitarized Zone. This comes shortly after China's massive military "exercises" in the Taiwan Strait during Taiwan's election campaign.

Back in 1960 when the first U.S.-Japan mutual security treaty was signed, student anti-American demonstrations prevented Eisenhower from making his scheduled trip to Japan. This time protests against Clinton's visit were sharpened by the rape of a 12-year-old girl by three U.S. servicemen in Okinawa. The U.S. is insisting on maintaining a Cold War-level presence in East Asia even in "concessions" to Okinawan rage—agreeing to give up 11 military facilities on Okinawa, but decreasing combat troops not at all.

The agreement that Clinton and Prime Minister Hashimoto signed expanding Japan's military role, including supplying military parts to U.S. forces in Japan, treads on slippery ground. Right-wing elements in Japan have been hostile to the constitutional provision renouncing war and the use of force, which the U.S. occupation imposed but which Japanese public opinion has strongly supported. The constitution is already battered enough by Japan's \$50 billion "Self-Defense Forces."

One Japanese business paper trumpeted that the scope of U.S.-Japan military cooperation now extended to the islands of the Pacific and to East Asia as far as Thailand. By no coincidence that is the scope of Japanese economic penetration in Asia. Movement of capital out of Japan and into production in Southeast Asia has been sizable enough to drop the level of the Japanese trade surplus with the U.S. as goods once produced in Japan may now be labeled "Made in Indonesia."

By no coincidence, the same area excluding China represents the limits of what pre-1945 Japanese imperialism claimed dominance of, and ultimately invaded, as

Youth

Punk diversity and revolt

by Kevin Michaels

The recent announcement of a Sex Pistols reunion tour, but many rushing to comment on the music's demise ignore one of its greatest features—its role as a meeting place for the diversity of youth. The past decade has seen the term "punk" become little more than a nostalgic term while much of the music inspired by its initial success has gone on to great success under the marketing name "alternative." At its best, though, punk and today's music which remains true to its spirit express the social turmoil of youth in capitalist society and a human response to it.

The emergence of punk in Britain in the late seventies occurred in a period of enormous unemployment. While the racist National Front was making recruiting inroads by scapegoating West Indian and Pakistani immigrants, bands like the Slits, the Ruts and Sham 69 played to interracial audiences and celebrated the rhythms of Jamaican music. The huge Rock Against Racism festivals were bold statements against the Right's street terror.

The excitement of British punk gave youth in America, experiencing the same economic downturn, a huge stimulus. Reagan's ascendancy seemed to crystallize the scene and young people rose to the challenge. The all-Black Washington, D.C., band Bad Brains, playing some of the fiercest hardcore to date, provided the lead for dozens of bands to follow and set a precedent for integrated shows. It was not unusual for all-white bands like Minor Threat to share bills with Trouble Funk, the stars of D.C.'s local brand of rap, called go-go. Integrated bands, like Scream and Dag Nasty, were not uncommon.

The D.C. scene's awareness of racism went beyond its immediate environment as well. 1985 saw the organization of a series of anti-apartheid "Punk Percussion Protests" in front of the South African embassy. Integrated crowds of hundreds of young people beat drums and cymbals for hours at a time to disrupt business as usual at the embassy. Fliers for the event even featured the old Abolitionist slogan, "Am I Not a Man and a Brother?"

The West Coast scene reflected California's diversity.

Youth in Revolt

Over 400 students rallied at Borough of Manhattan Community College on March 28 to decry Gov. Pataki's cuts in education funding. A major focus of the demonstration was the effect budget cuts would have on child care offered by schools to students with children.

* * *

Students in Utah face a ban on all extracurricular clubs, passed by the state legislature in April. The action was a direct response to the forming of a club for gay students at a high school in Salt Lake City. By banning all student organizations, legislators hope to avoid charges of anti-gay discrimination.

* * *

Over 1,100 University of Michigan graduate student teaching assistants began walking picket lines in early April because of the university's refusal to bargain in good faith with their union, the Graduate Employees Organization. One prominent issue in the dispute is the current requirement that international students must undergo an unpaid, three-week training period.

* * *

Thousands of South Korean students mobilized to protest the death of 20-year-old Roh Soo Sok after a beating by riot police on March 30. Over 10,000 marched in Seoul on April 4 to demand the resignation of President Kim Young Sam and the disbandment of the riot police force. Soo Sok's death took place during a demonstration against government corruption and cuts in education funding.

At least two members of the ever-shifting early lineup of Black Flag were Latino. Other bands, like the Zeros and the Plugz, were all Latino.

Women's participation in punk was always made difficult by the amount of physical aggression exhibited at shows, which sometimes degenerated into outright violence. More significant was a pronounced element of sexism which permeated a music performed by and for a predominantly male audience. Several bands on the L.A. scene, though, proved exceptions to the rule. The Germs and the Bags, hailed as pioneers of the music, included women members.

The line dividing punk from the rest of popular music began to blur as the term "New Wave" was stumbled upon as a way to make the underground seem less threatening. MTV played a huge role in this process, but even its huge impact couldn't destroy the network of independent labels, zines and show-bookings enthusiasts which had sprung up in the early eighties.

The nineties has seen a specialization of the music into such genres as Straight Edge and Emocore but also a broadening of the historical diversity in what remains of its initial explosion. Women have successfully combated sexism to come to the fore in bands like Bikini Kill and Spitboy. Gay youth now have an acknowledged presence through such bands as Pansy Division and Tribe 8.

Punk's diversity, unrecognized by many, continues to be a meeting place for youth. Although the path to a new society intimidated by much of the music may not be explicit, a desire for something profoundly different than what prevails is understood.

'Content of Our Character'

Los Angeles—In South-East L.A. on April 6 there was a youth conference defending affirmative action entitled "The Content of Our Character" and sponsored by South Central Youth Empowered Through Action and Youth for Justice. There were about 50 people there, a melting pot of color, from Black youth to white, Brown, Asian and Indian, discussing the attacks upon affirmative action as being at the heart of the attack upon education of all youth, white included.

An Indian youth stated that if the society we live in is based on race and gender (racism and sexism), then we need solutions based on race and gender, i.e., affirmative action programs to help fight this discrimination. A white high school youth spoke on the importance of affirmative action for whites as well: "Multiculturalism is fair to everyone. If 30 years of affirmative action hasn't solved the problem, then it's no time to abolish it now."

A Black woman showed how it was impossible to be free after the Civil War had been fought and won to abolish slavery: "To be a free man or woman, it was not so. How can you be free without rights?"

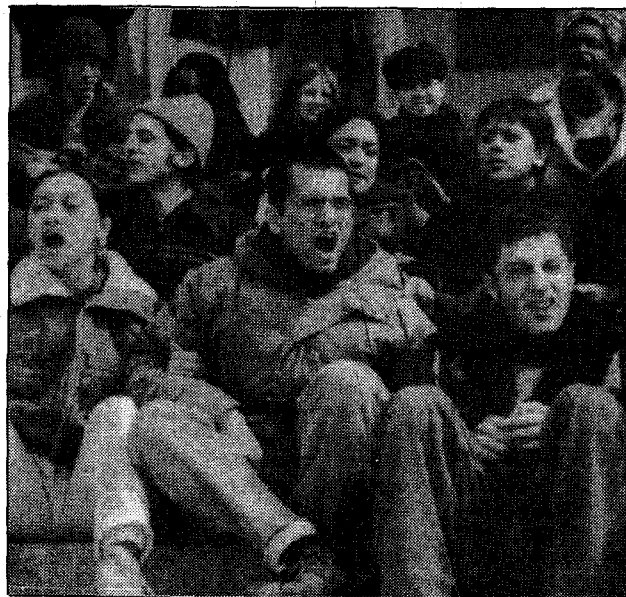
Many of the Latinos spoke against the recent police beating of two "illegal" immigrants from Mexico. One Latina stated that we don't have the movement of the 1960s—there is no Vietnam War and body bags coming home from Vietnam—but we do have body bags right here at home and it's the police who are creating them.

The bottom line from the youth at this conference was that: "All of us, Black, Brown, white and Yellow, should be able to reach our goal as a clenched fist, and that whenever there is change in this country the youth have done it, and we will do it again!"

—Gene Ford

Victory for ethnic studies at Columbia U.

New York—On April 15, a substantial gain was won by students fighting for a Department of Ethnic Studies at Columbia University in New York. Two weeks earlier a hunger strike was begun by four students after a long period of unsuccessful negotiation with the administration which had culminated in a sit-in at the Columbia College Dean's Office. Despite administration assurances to take seriously demands for an Ethnic Studies department—with control over a budget and hiring of tenured faculty to teach Asian-American, Native American, African-American and Latino studies—nothing happened.



With the hunger strike there began a series of campuswide disruptions to force the issue. Students set up an informational tent on the grass alongside college walk and entered into a battle of ideas over the very idea of "Ethnic Studies."

Finally, responding to student demands, George Rupp, the university's president, issued a statement declaring that he was in agreement with the student's demands. His overture was bogus. In a response to Rupp's letter, "the Committee on Ethnic Studies and the Core Curriculum" stated that "we do not have the same goals... the administration seeks ostensibly to diversify the curriculum through tokenization while we seek to democratize the university."

Demanding immediate action and incensed that Rupp had totally ignored the ongoing hunger strike, over 100 students took over Low Library. Despite threats of arrest, students stayed the night.

Late the next morning New York police, in full riot gear, were ordered onto the campus for the first time since 1968. Clearly meant to intimidate and break the movement, 22 students were arrested for trespassing. But the movement's appeals for solidarity were largely met. This was a simple case where students became convinced that unity would cancel the administration's threats.

A mass meeting, called after the arrests, was held on Low Plaza. From there 300 sat in inside Butler Library and then marched into Hamilton Hall, the site of the disinvestment campaign of a decade ago when it became "Mandela Hall." Opposite the Patriarchs inscribed into the facade, students plastered the walls of "Hamilton" with other names like Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Steve Biko and Cesar Chavez.

After five days of occupation an agreement was reached: no department but the hiring, over the next year, of four professors to teach Asian-American and Latino studies. The students left the building two by two chanting, "The students united will never be defeated."

Clearly the movement had wrested concessions out of

the administration, but it is also clear that the struggle has only just begun. As one graduate student put it, "What guarantees are there that Columbia will hire radicals? Columbia has a track record of not tenuring its more radical and outspoken faculty."

For the democratization of the university to have any reality, one activist said, students need to have more say in the academic and administrative decision-making process, including tenure decisions.

The movement, and the feelings of solidarity, have had an enormous radicalizing effect. "I've experienced some of the most powerful moments in my life," said one student whose feeling that he had experienced a real education was echoed by many. Whether this movement will herald a new student movement remains to be seen, but coming at the moment when many Black and women's studies departments have been closed or threatened with closure, it represents students' refusal to be always on the defensive.

—F. Shelley

A challenge to pragmatism

San Jose, Cal.—As progressive Californians face the task of defeating the draconian anti-affirmative action ballot measure—known by the misnomer of the California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI)—a variety of strategies are being tested. Two different viewpoints were in evidence at a press conference held on April 18 at San Jose State University.

The event launched an "Affirmative Action Education Campaign" sponsored by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), an organization that has taken the lead in the legal battles against Proposition 187. But at this event they were pragmatically self-limiting, focusing only on the immediate task of defeating the CCRI.

However, MALDEF had chosen a university campus for this press conference in order to hear from faculty and students of color, and so they did, loud and clear! Jorge Gonzales, a professor and community activist, reminded the audience that "nothing of the finest ideals comes from the government—it is a product of struggle, from the people." Henry Gutierrez, another Chicano professor, pointed out that these attacks on affirmative action are part of a larger economic, and ideological, restructuring on the part of the rulers.

A professor of African-American studies, Cobie Kwase Harris, targeted CCRI as another example of white supremacy, which attempts to suppress all peoples' "objective interests as human beings." He added that CCRI will not crush the "indomitable will of people to struggle for justice," noting that African-Americans "never have and we never will...rest in our quest for justice."

While there was only one student speaker, Alberto Verduzco, he militantly refused to keep issues isolated from each other as he passionately related incidents of institutional racism on the San Jose State campus to the climate which fosters attacks like CCRI.

All of this was in sharp contrast to the "official" video, and the lawyers, politicians and business people at the press conference. They stressed—positively—how affirmative action was compatible with capitalism, militarism and social class divisions. The video highlighted Colin Powell and corporate CEOs as veritable poster people for affirmative action.

While this may seem a "prudent" strategy for an election issue, I think the militant voices from campus suggest otherwise. The totality of peoples' disgust with racism, profits and false limitations can be heard in those voices that search for something more than staving off the assaults of the far Right. The real question emerging from this internally divided press conference, even if its full philosophic import remained unspoken, is "What kind of society do we want?"

—Jennifer Pen

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INTERNATIONAL MARXIST HUMANISTS

ENGLAND

BCM Box 3514, London, England WC1N 3XX

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

For 16 days in April, Israel pounded Lebanon with U.S.-supplied aircraft and artillery, killing over 100 civilians, and creating nearly half a million refugees. The most horrific attack came on April 18, when Israeli artillery hit a United Nations peacekeeping camp, killing over 75 refugees.

Earlier, Israelis used a U.S.-made Apache helicopter to attack a clearly marked Lebanese ambulance, killing two women and four girls, and then callously refused even to apologize. They blockaded Lebanese ports for the first time since 1982. In a region which has seen the per capita water supply sink to one third what it was in 1960, Israeli warplanes also destroyed a reservoir supplying water to 20 villages. All of this rained down on a country which in the last few years has begun to rebuild after years of civil war and invasions.

The raids began on April 11, after a series of tit for tat incidents in southern Lebanon between Israeli forces and the fundamentalist Shiite Hezbollah movement. In late March, Israeli forces killed two Lebanese civilians, claiming that it was by mistake, but Hezbollah retaliated by launching a few of its Russian-made Katyusha rockets into northern Israel. A week later, two Lebanese boys were killed in an unexplained explosion which was blamed on Israel, prompting another rocket attack into

Lebanon invasion undermines peace process

northern Israel. All of these incidents are rooted in two longstanding facts: Israel's illegal occupation of a ten-mile self-proclaimed "security zone" in southern Lebanon, and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah's commitment to the destruction of Israel.

According to *The Other Israel*, "there were protests taking place and critical articles of individual columnists appearing in the different daily papers. After yesterday's (April 18) bloodbath there was a shock reaction. As a result there were new spontaneous protests, involving a wider circle, taking place in Tel-Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem, and today several protest demonstrations were organized by different organizations, each mobilizing some hundreds during the early afternoon hours of the busy Friday."

Israel's barbaric and totally disproportionate response to some relatively minor incidents was rooted in election-year politics. Elections, scheduled for May, will now come at a time when the Labor government of Shimon Peres has lost ground in the polls due to its inability to stop the Hamas suicide bombings which have claimed the lives of so many Israeli civilians.

The 16-day bombardment of Lebanon was a blatant

appeal for votes from supporters of the Right. It was also a deep humiliation for those Arabs who have stuck their necks out for peace, and against narrow nationalism. Finally, it has strengthened fundamentalist and rejectionist forces throughout the Middle East.

As we go to press, a cease-fire seems to have been worked out between Israel and Hezbollah. However, Israel's imperialist incursions into Lebanon have actually overshadowed the historic April 22 vote by the Palestine National Council to remove from its charter all clauses calling for Israel's destruction, as well as the vote the next day by the Israeli Labor Party to end its opposition to a Palestinian state.

Chernobyl: then and now

Chernobyl is a nuclear disaster that erupted April 26, ten years ago. Chernobyl is a nuclear disaster that is still erupting April 26, 1996. As if a smoldering ember suddenly flared up to prove its continuing deadly existence, a fire spread quickly through abandoned villages surrounding the reactors still operating at the nuclear power plant complex in Ukraine, only days before April 26.

The fire was started accidentally by commemorative candles lit by former residents who had returned for the anniversary to commemorate those killed by the disaster ten years ago. The wind and fire raised fresh fears about a new release of radioactive dust.

Yet the threat of potential new dangers could hardly be worse than the human devastation of the last ten years: from 5,000 to over 125,000 killed directly or indirectly by the nuclear disaster; up to two million people still living on contaminated soil and eating contaminated food products; one-fifth of the Republic of Belarus, north of Chernobyl's winds, unfit for any agriculture. Most damning is the 100-fold increase in thyroid cancer among children.

The nuclear security summit of the world's state-capitalist powers, meeting in Moscow, adjourned only days before the anniversary, paying unanimous lip service to Chernobyl but agreeing to do little. There are still promises but no firm commitment from international powers to ante up the \$3 billion which Ukraine's government demands to take off line the two reactors still operating at Chernobyl. Since 1986, political life in the former USSR has gone through upheaval, while the 15 Chernobyl-style nuclear reactors still operating across the former Russian empire have not.

Instead of insisting these reactors be shut down, the summit leaders suggested they be "improved" to meet international "safety standards"—ten years after Chernobyl exposed the inherent design flaws in reactors which were built to produce material for nuclear weapons, not to generate electricity. Their final declaration included a commitment "to measures which will enable nuclear power...to continue in the next century to play an important role."

At the same time, anti-nuclear citizens' groups held their own "Nuclear Summit Watch" in Moscow. While the rulers were meeting in Moscow, one of the activists, Alexandr Nikitin, was spending his 11th week in a KGB jail, charged with high treason through espionage—punishable by death. His crime was co-writing a report on the dangers of Russia's deteriorating nuclear submarines. Nikitin's group, Bellona—especially his co-author, Igor Kudrik—have been targeted for repression.

Every day, more and more is being added to the world's collective pile of radioactive waste, especially in the technologically "advanced" West. As the nuclear waste "industry" tries to dump this lethal mess in economically starved, usually minority communities, they are increasingly being confronted by new groups opposed to eco-racism.

Chernobyl, in the east, was preceded by the 1979 Three Mile Island disaster in the U.S. The difference in magnitude should not cloud their sameness. Capitalist nuclear technology—whether for weapons, commodity production, or stockholder profits paid for by the consumers—will never have anything to do with human life.

Elections in Italy

The April 23 parliamentary elections made the re-named Communist Party, the Democratic Party of the Left, the dominant political force in Italy for the first time since World War II. The Olive Tree coalition, composed of the Democratic Party of the Left, some former Christian Democrats and social democrats, liberals, and ecologists, received over 40% of the vote, putting it in position to form a government.

Yet this election was no breakthrough for Leftist ideas or policies. A New York Times editorial (April 25) noted that the Democratic Party of the Left today supports "markets, NATO membership, and the European Union" and that it had campaigned "not for ideology but for clean and workable government." Representatives of big capital such as Fiat and the Bank of Italy applauded the election result, and the stock market rose.

On the losing side were the demagogic business tycoon Silvio Berlusconi and the supposedly reformed neo-fascist party. These groups represent a hard right committed to drastic austerity and the "free market," and opposed to immigration, women's rights, and lesbian and gay rights.

The victorious Olive Tree coalition promises a kinder and gentler form of austerity, but has no solution to Italy's nationwide unemployment rate of 12%, let alone to the staggering 30% rate in southern Italy. Olive Tree is to the right even of Eurocommunism.

Growing revolt in Indonesia

In recent weeks, a series of strikes, revolts by oppressed nationalities, and acts of defiance by liberal journalists have plagued the conservative Suharto military regime, in power in Indonesia since 1965. This year, the 20th anniversary of Indonesia's 1976 conquest and subsequent genocidal repression in East Timor, has been marked by small but significant new youth demonstrations there.

The population of the Indonesian-ruled territory of Irian Jaya, part of the island of New Guinea, has also risen in revolt. In January, after a series of massacres of the local population by the Indonesian army, guerrillas of the Free Papua Movement (FPM) kidnapped 13 employees of Freeport Indonesia, a U.S.-owned mining company which extracts 120,000 tons of copper, gold and silver ore per day, and which is sitting on the world's largest known gold deposits. Freeport Indonesia and logging companies also operating in the area are polluting the rivers and destroying the forests on a vast scale, while the wealth they create is going either abroad or to the Indonesian ruling class based hundreds of miles away in Jakarta.

In March, after the death in prison of FPM leader Thomas Wapoi Wainggai, ascribed officially to a "heart attack," indigenous people armed only with bows and arrows attacked the airport and the mining company's offices. Joined by college students, they battled heavily armed Indonesian troops.

Indonesia's low wages (the official minimum is \$2.10 per day) have attracted Nike and other multinational corporations. Despite severe repression, a young and growing working class has staged hundreds of strikes. Journalists in Jakarta have also fought for freedom of the press, in some cases going to jail and then continuing to publish on the Internet from there after the government shut down their magazines.

Brazil peasant occupations



Police attacked landless peasants occupying a highway in the northern Brazil state of Para on April 17, killing 19 people. It was the most serious confrontation between authorities and the burgeoning movement of rural land occupiers since last summer. Videotapes of the massacre, showing police machine gunning protesters armed only with rocks, produced outrage across the country.

As April began, over 31,000 families, under the banner of the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST), had occupied government and private idle land. Nearly half of Brazil's huge area is owned by a tiny 1% of the population. The landowners use the property for investment and tax shelters—anything but agricultural production—while over five million families are landless, according to the government's own figures. The MST estimates 195 million acres are idle.

The peasant movement has seen numerous advances in the last two months alone. Women invaded a ranch in Pontal do Paranapanema to mark International Women's Day, March 8. And at the beginning of April, the MST organized marches on 17 state capitals and took over an 18,000 acre ranch in Mato Grosso state.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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25¢

Which team are you on?



by John Marcotte

"A part of the bourgeoisie is desirous of redressing social grievances, in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society. To this section belong economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working class, organizers of charity....Bourgeois Socialism attains adequate expression when, and only when, it becomes a mere figure of speech....It is summed up in the phrase: the bourgeois is a bourgeois—for the benefit of the working class."

—Karl Marx, *Communist Manifesto*.

Not a thing would get produced or done at work, if we as workers did not cooperate with each other everyday to get the job done. In fact, Marx has a whole section of *Capital* on the new social force that is cooperative labor. Unfortunately, this cooperation is not under our democratic control for the needs of ourselves and all humanity. It is cooperation for the corporation, and appears as the doing of the capitalist. Now with Team Concept, the capitalists are trying to use the natural cooperation of labor against us even more, to make us work harder.

But the humanism of working people, as opposed to the fake "humanitarianism" of the bourgeoisie, is always creating trouble for the rulers. I was talking with a friend who works at GM. He told me, "The Team Concept is the best system I've seen, if it wasn't for GM. If it was workers controlling production, then it would be like the Paris Commune. If it was under workers' control, we'd set the amount of work we did."

(continued on page 3)

ON THE INSIDE

From *The Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya* •
'Dialectics of Revolution and
Women's Liberation' page 4
Review Essay • Istvan Meszaros's
'Beyond Capital' page 5
Editorial • The 'minimum' wage ... page 10

Black World

Objective Black world connections



by Lou Turner

At what moment does the class structure of the Black world reveal its material foundations in the secret savageries of capitalist accumulation? The "20th Anniversary Scholarship and Awards Gala" put on by the Chicago Association of Black Journalists (CAJB) at the posh South Shore Country Club, May 10, and sponsored by such multi-national corporations as Shell Oil Company and Waste Management, the world's largest waste company, represented such a moment.

The Black urban professionals (buppies) at this \$100-a-plate, black-tie affair were dumbly oblivious to the corporate cannibals at their table. Career opportunities, not Black misery, was their cynically naive take on these powerful corporate interests who quite literally are some of the foremost agents of genocide against Black people in Africa and the U.S., and who with impunity ply a new triangular trade of mineral riches, toxic pollution, and cheap labor throughout the Black world.

This always-on-the-lookout-for-a-job-as-a-front-for-the-capitalist-bottom-line, Black media elite could scarcely conceal its irritation when one young awards recipient reminded them of the need to actively support the release of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the Black militant journalist sitting on Pennsylvania's death row.

Of course, in the real capitalist scheme of things, the crumbs that companies like Shell and Waste Management let fall from their table to gain influence in Black governments, institutions, and organizations is just part of the costs of accumulating vast amounts of capital in some of the poorest (Black) communities in the world.

Waste Management has 22 registered Washington lobbyists, and 35 former government officials—including seven from the EPA—on its payroll. And as was quite conspicuous at the CAJB "Gala," this major toxic polluter of Black communities, has former press secretary for

(Continued on page 8)

Western Europe Spring 1996: new labor battles,



by Kevin Anderson

Berlin—Despite some modest gains by left and emancipatory forces, the overall tendency in Western Europe is to the Right. But new challenges from labor in the wake of France's mass strikes of last winter show that serious resistance can also emerge, even in today's retrogressive climate.

GERMANY: STATE-CAPITALISM THROWS DOWN GAUNTLET

In Germany, the region's dominant economy, the conservative Helmut Kohl government and employer groups have announced a whole series of cuts in wages and social benefits. These are designed, they say, to create economic growth and lower the unemployment rate, the latter having climbed from 7.6% to 10.1% since 1992.

In late April, Kohl unveiled his "savings package." It will cut social aid levels for the unemployed, the ill and the elderly, and slash family assistance. For example, workers will receive 80% rather than 100% of their pay for sick days. Employer groups also announced plans to stonewall any new wage or benefits increases.

In response, international capital collectively rubbed its hands together with glee, saying it was about time! A commentator intoned on the business pages of the *International Herald Tribune* (5-9-96): "It should by now be painfully obvious that Germany's cushy, consensus-

based welfare state is ill-suited to meeting the challenges of the global economy.

"The country's rigid, high-cost labor market is crushing job creation and entrepreneurial flair, and the fabled social consensus that was once the envy of other industrial countries has become an obstacle to change."

GERMAN LABOR ACCEPTS THE CHALLENGE

Many on the Left and in the labor movement were taken by surprise by these recent developments, having considered Germany almost an exception to the global trend toward lowering the standard of living of the working people as a supposed key to economic "competitiveness." But within days, fierce resistance began to mount, with strikes and demonstrations filling the month of May. Union leaders accused capital and the state of reverting to "savage capitalism," while tens of thousands of workers took to the streets.

In the first weeks of May, public-sector workers in transport, the post office, sanitation, airports, and banking staged brief "warning strikes." The powerful metalworkers union, IG Metall, with 9 million members, announced its own job actions, while the national union federation warned that a "hot summer" was ahead.

As the strikes continued, Kohl blustered that he had "never been impressed by threats" and that the strikers

(continued on page 9)

Israeli elections: hair breadth victory of Likud

Jerusalem—It's a depressing day for peace and democracy in Israel. When the counting was over, Benjamin Netanyahu on the Right had squeezed past Shimon Peres by a hair's breadth. But oh what a change that little hair will bring! What's even worse is the enormous gain of the three fundamentalist religious parties—from 16 to 23 seats—in the Knesset. Considering that Netanyahu's Likud party won only 32 seats, that means that the Likud will be beholden to the religious to form a coalition, and require their assent to every move. This will be an (un)holy alliance of xenophobia, territorial maximalism, and theocracy.

To spell it out, here's my less-than-sanguine prognosis for the coming four years:

1. The peace process grinds to a halt, obstructed by:
 - a) the new government's failure to fully respect the autonomy agreements already achieved (let alone go along with the idea of an independent Palestinian state);
 - b) intransigence on removing Jewish settlements beyond the Green Line (including the 500 fanatics in the heart of Hebron);
 - c) the need to prove its "security" credentials by preventing terrorism at all costs—including maintaining the cruel closure of the territories, preferring the import of Romanian and Thai laborers to indigent Palestinians next door, and beefing up the security network (broadening the powers of the secret service, sanctioning now-denied torture of security prisoners, etc.).
2. Economically, it will be galloping privatization, a slow-down if not halt in foreign investment that had been stimulated by the current peace-liberal policies, and a sharp drop in economic growth that had surged for-

ward (at some 6% annually) following the Oslo accords—ending in more unemployment and concomitant economic ills.

3. And on other social issues, we can expect a halt to the process of democracy and liberalization that had begun (civil rights for women and gays, freedom from religious coercion), as the religious will undoubtedly be awarded the ministries of education, religion, and interior.

In short, it's a victory for reactionary politics. And it was caused by the demagoguery of installing fear plus ultra-Orthodox rabbis commanding their flocks to vote Netanyahu. The result will be the equivalent of George Bush winning for president and Pat Buchanan holding the cabinet seats for education, labor, welfare, and rights for women and gays.

After we recover from the shock, what I envision for the 50% of us who "lost" (the election was decided by less than 1% of the vote), is a return to the streets and backbenches of the opposition. It exhausts me just thinking about it. We'll need a lot of support from our friends everywhere.

—Gila Svirsky

**WOMEN'S LIBERATION AND
THE DIALECTICS OF
REVOLUTION**
by Raya Dunayevskaya

New edition See Page 4

Women demand environmental justice

by Laurie Cashdan

When environmental justice activists converged on the south side of Chicago, May 17-19, for the first Midwest-Great Lakes Environmental Justice Summit, Black and Native American grassroots community activists were in the majority. This was no accident, since the conference had been convened by People for Community Recovery (PCR), founded in the 1980s by Hazel Johnson in Altgeld Gardens—a public housing project built in the 1940s in Chicago's "toxic doughnut."

Amidst this dialogue among Black and Native American activists, white environmental activists, EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) officials and foundation representatives, women of color made their presence known. These women spoke confidently but with great

Woman as Reason

urgency, often as founders of community groups, whether that was Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice or Parents Against Lead. Though most have been activists for years, they now face direct assault from the reactionaries in Congress on even those small gains won by pressuring EPA to clean up their communities.

Few had any illusions that the government was friendly to community empowerment. Hazel Johnson, the "mother of the environmental justice movement," spoke with great passion during the first plenary session. "Environmental justice doesn't yet have a set definition," she said. "It's very important for us at the grassroots level to define it for our own communities. If we let the EPA define it, we lose."

Most women I spoke with became involved when health crises caused by deadly toxins struck their families. Maurci Jackson, with Parents Against Lead, found that both her children were poisoned through over-exposure to lead. Pat Jackson, editor of PCR's newsletter, F.A.T.E. (Fighting Against a Toxic Environment), developed severe asthma and rashes covering her entire body after moving to Altgeld Gardens. Linda King and her children nearly died from the health affects of pollutants spewed from six specialty chemical companies in Nitro, West Virginia.

Such crises provoked deep commitments to the movement and a self-education process that led them to conclude that environmental injustice disproportionately strikes low-income communities of color. Nadine Escamea, from the Oneida tribe around Green Bay, Wis., is fighting developers creating an exclusive non-Indian community, Thornberry Creek, on reservation land by stealing water rights and pushing up taxes.

Donele Wilkins, a founder of Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice and member of the National Black Women's Health Project, first got involved

Demand for radical reform of women's prisons

San Francisco—While in pursuit of information as a representative of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, I discovered a group of activists called the Coalition to Support Women Prisoners in Chowchilla. This group had been moved by stories that were coming out of Central California Women's Facility (CCWF) about inadequate medical care.

The stories about countless sick and dying women were the subject of many discussions, as were the frustrated efforts to get basic information to the women who were HIV positive or had full-blown AIDS. A lot that was sent inside never reached the hands of women needing or desiring the information.

I sat in a room listening to how women prisoners were dying. However, what I heard outside of the room was the noise that concerned me the most. It was not the screams of dying prisoners but the silence. The Department of Corrections had to be exposed for its barbaric treatment of dying prisoners and voices from the community had to be raised.

The Coalition was determined to make the general public aware of the poor medical conditions and treatment of women, and organized a demonstration in front of CCWF. People caravaned from the Bay Area and other parts of the state to express their frustration and anger over the medical treatment or lack of treatment that women were receiving at CCWF. We joined with a coalition of legal groups to bring a law suit to stop the medical abuse at CCWF and California Institute for Women.

The California Coalition for Women Prisoners was formed (in April 1995) around the idea of assisting women in their efforts to sue for better medical treatment and to support women in prison. They wanted to engage in public education and correspondence with prisoners. Last summer they organized over a hundred people and carpooled to CCWF for a demonstration.

In December, more than 100 demonstrated in San Francisco in a raging rain. In March, more than 400 mainly women heard former women prisoners speak personally about conditions of confinement, poor medical treatment and how it feels to lose a family. The California Department of Corrections will be tried for the abuses of women prisoners in both the Civil Court and in the Court of Public Opinion.

If you want more information about the California Coalition for Women Prisoners, contact Karen Shain, 415/255-7036, ext. 313 or Judy Greenspan, HIV/AIDS in Prison Project at 510/834-5657, ext. 3150.

—Dorsey Nunn

through the occupational safety movement. She realized health and safety hazards were most severe but least addressed for working-class Black communities. "Not only are we being killed on the jobs, but we take what we are exposed to home to our children. We can't afford to live further from our workplaces because of limited transportation."

These women became "experts" in chemical processes and health issues. "I have a science background and I began to read a lot, not traditional books but ones I exchanged with different people," explained Cheryl Johnson, Hazel Johnson's daughter. "There was no voice. There was no one discussing this the way it needs to be discussed." Linda King found that the government had no intention of helping her. Founder of Environmental Health Network, she urges community activists not to let the government do health studies, but to sponsor their own studies.

"It's not environmental justice, it's environmental in justice and it's all about racism!" exclaimed Pat Jackson. "Until they end racism, there will never be environmental justice. So there's no such thing as environmental justice."

The other women also felt environmental justice went beyond cleaning up individual communities. "The environmental justice movement is about human rights and sustainability of communities," declared Johnson. "The society that has put us in this sub-standard housing, they're liable. When the City of Chicago built Altgeld Gardens, they knew what they were doing."

"Low-income minority families do not have the luxury to move into areas that are safe," asserted Maurci Jackson. "The areas designated for them are sub-standard. The community's name may change, but the conditions are the same. The majority of the families are on fixed income."

These women felt strongly about the importance of women's leadership in the environmental justice movement. Cheryl Johnson commented that women spearheaded PCR because they were "more concerned about the negative impact on our health, our community, especially our children." "It's a passion," added Pat Jackson. "Where some people would say, there's nothing I can do about it, [these women] get out there and want to fight. That's why they take the leadership." While Jackson argued that women of the '90s are not afraid to stand up for themselves, King cautioned that this leadership is attacked by government and foundation officials. They told her group in Nitro, "You're just housewives, you can't possibly understand these complicated issues."

The environmental justice movement faces the challenge of deepening the movement at a time when reactionaries in Congress are on the offensive. The radical critique expressed by the women of color whose passion and politicization initiated the movement has the potential to galvanize a broader social movement. "It's our responsibility, given who we are, to be radical," argued Wilkins. "To be radical is to change this world."

Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey



Nurses protested outside Bellevue Hospital in Manhattan, May 22, against increased layoffs at New York's public hospitals. City money to those hospitals has been cut by more than 75%, severely endangering the quality of health care for its mainly poor patients.

* * *

After male co-workers tried for two years to sexually harass the only woman member of the Stockholm, Sweden Police Department's canine unit out of her job, Lotta Haglund succeeded in her efforts to fight back. In April, the city gave the male cops an ultimatum—the guilty ones admit responsibility or all would be fired. None did and now all 60 men are out of a job.

* * *

Despite the fact that many women and adolescent girls not massacred in Rwanda were raped, the International Tribunal for Rwanda has not included rape or sexual abuse of women in any of the ten indictments handed down. When the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia first issued its indictments, only sex crimes against men were acknowledged as torture. Later, after much pressure from women's groups, rape and sexual abuse were charged as torture. We need to do the same for women in Rwanda.

Shainape Shcapwe (Helen Moore) 1941-1996

Shainape Shcapwe bridged more worlds than most of us have walked through. She was not only an activist but a thinker and writer in all of them. A Yankton Sioux born on the Fort Totten Reservation, she spoke nothing but Lakota until she was six years old. By the time she had finished Indian boarding school and the State School for the Blind, the forced assimilation had robbed her of her ability to speak her own language.

She was active in the Civil Rights Movement, and participated in the Montgomery Bus Boycott at age 14 as a part of an historic delegation of Lakota people. She was active in CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) as an adult when she had left the reservation and moved to the city.

Blind from birth, she was a lifelong participant in the struggle of blind people for civil rights and human dignity. When forced onto welfare, she became active in welfare rights. She brought the voice of women's liberation to every struggle she was involved in. She insisted that each of these struggles hear her Lakota voice. She also insisted that the Indian movement work with and learn from every freedom movement.

In the aftermath of Wounded Knee (1973), the American Indian Movement (AIM) struggled to survive against the full force of government repression. Shainape Shcapwe's News & Letters column "Native American Speaks" (1975-1979) linked the Native American struggle in the U.S. with native voices in Canada, Australia and Latin America. She brought to light relationships between the Black American freedom movement and the origins of AIM, and the little-known labor dimension of Indian workers fighting government-corporate sweatshop exploitation in both reservation factories and in urban areas.

She wrote not only about forced sterilization of Native American women, but of their contributions to the movement, and warned AIM leaders that women's liberation was necessary to the character and forward direction of the movement.

Even after poor health forced her to cease her regular column in 1979 Shainape Shcapwe continued to write for N&L through the 1980s. With the publication of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, she became committed to a dialogue with Native American activists on Marx's writings on Native Americans in his *Ethnological Notebooks*.

Her 1985 column, "Indian movement needs genuine Marxism," critiqued movement leaders Russell Means and Vine Deloria for rejecting Marx after having experienced only the distorted Marxism of the American Left. "That is not a good enough reason to not explore Marx's own philosophy," she wrote. "You can see more clearly than ever that it was not true that Marx was Eurocentred...."

"I think that Marxist-Humanism speaks to working out a philosophy for what we really want, especially what we want after the revolution. In the past, people have taken bits and pieces of Marx to suit the time, and wound up being misled, rather than really studying Marx. That can't be the way anymore."

Her unique contributions concretized Marxist-Humanism's philosophy of liberation. She brought her multi-dimensional subjectivity into Marxist-Humanism as she worked to develop a kind of freedom that was total, and totally new, for all.

—Steve Fletcher and Susan Van Gelder

'Assembly line education'

Fayette County, Tenn.—We just got the right to elect our school board members in 1994. Before they were appointed by the County Commissioner and they usually worked for him.

The majority of the board is white and send their kids to private all-white schools and use the public school funds for those private white schools. The majority of the teachers in the public schools used to be Black and they worked hard to get decent retirement benefits. Now the whites, who teach at the private schools, teach for two or three years at the public schools just to collect that retirement.

I have a son in school who often talks about the problems. He said, "Out of about 400 seniors, maybe 125 are going to graduate. A lot of them missed a lot of school days and they won't get their diploma. But this one guy got a scholarship for basketball and he missed 77 days and they're going to let him off."

They get an assembly line education—it keeps moving, ready or not. The teacher has to teach what's handed down by the board and keep pace with that, not with what the students need. If enough kids don't pass it affects the federal funds and the Board doesn't want to take any chances. It's kids versus the money and the money always wins.

They feel a majority of them are going to be left without jobs even with a degree or a high school education. Maybe only 10% of those 125 who did graduate get to go to college and then only if they can get a scholarship.

I told my son, we should get a report from the kids on what's going on in the system. Nobody talks to the kids about what they did in school; how did the teacher present the class? The student government needs to get involved and let the children know that if they want more things going on at school, it's going to take the student body and the student government to do it.

—Candice

Fresh load of bosses at Delta Pride

Indianola, Miss.—There is a whole new game going on at Delta Pride. You remember when the plant started up in the early 1980s, it was run by a group of rich white Delta farmers and businessmen. Then after we fought them and won in the 1990 strike, the owners brought in the "California boys" to run the plant, with new "management techniques." Now we have been told that responsibility for the whole Delta Pride operation has been turned over to a Canadian-owned company called Seafresh.

We were told that they tried to purchase Delta Pride, but the deal didn't go through. So now they have been

New tools of job control

Chicago—The fundamental perverse relation of capitalist "production" is that people equal things. But this relation is not limited strictly to production. It is true of all types of labor in this society, including the so-called service sector. This is true of the notion of abstract labor as well.

This is what I mean. On the production line, you knew that all work was geared to the Holy Grail of capitalism: production, production, production. Those of us on the outside never had to worry as much. We had some freedom of movement.

Now when we unload a truck, we have to leave the bar codes facing out so the boss can scan them and measure what day, what time and what amount was unloaded. Then the time you're done is entered in, so they know to the second how long it took you to produce.

When I talk to a friend who works in an office, whose every step is monitored by the computer or the boss, we see the nature of our jobs has so much in common now that it sounds the same. Whether I work in a service sector job, or an office, we are talking of the same kind of labor. All we are is one big mass of abstract labor.

The whole question to me is the perversity of being just thought of as a thing, an abstract laborer. The nature of labor becomes more and more in kind, and the more you can see in the struggles of others your own struggle. This means that like everything in capitalism, the notion of abstract labor does have the seeds of its opposition within it, and can be its own destruction. The more they go on with technology and rigidly treating all things as equal, the more you can see these fake walls of differences between different forms of labor come down.

—David L. Anderson

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

"But we also have the company saying what the time and motion studies set. So the 'planners' (each team has a worker who is a planner) can switch work around, which makes it better for workers in a sense—but it doesn't work that way because the company says our goal is to eliminate three workers out of 60, then gives workers some little say as to how it will be done. Each job still has to come up to so many minutes out of the hour."

"He said he was at a GM plant where they had Quality of Work Life meetings. They would take a group off the line, and we would spend a week. People would break up into five-person teams, and they'd give us different exercises, acting-out types of skits I've seen workers, within a couple of hours of knowing each other, write these skits. I saw people who never spoke in front of other people getting up and speaking and doing a hell of a job."

"There was a person from the union and the company teaching these classes. They kept real good control of it. Anything it would get a direction they didn't like, they pulled it right back. But it's amazing how people came together. To me I've seen a glimpse of what can happen, when workers are turned loose in full-blown freedom, if it was not under the control of the company. The workers kind of come out of themselves, like a flower opening up."

"Team concept seems like a very fragile kind of balance, that could tip one way or the other, to workers controlling production. I'm not quite certain the workers see the amount of control they are exercising. Every six months we make up the rules for our team—of course they still have to be OK'd by the company and the union—we don't elect our positions, we decided we want it by seniority. We have a timekeeper, who keeps a record of our hours (we don't punch in or out), a safety person, who gives us reports of meetings and the planner. We're running our team. We do the reports."

"Thirty years ago, the workers on the line were so separated from the mental work of running the plant. I am not certain the average worker sees the amount of control they are exercising, but you never know what might happen to make it go the other way, to where workers get into the control."

At the time my friend was telling me all this, the GM workers in Dayton, Ohio were on strike over the company outsourcing, or giving away, their jobs. He said what the strikers were fighting in essence was "paragraph 8 of the UAW contract, which gives full control over the means of production to the company. It says they can put the means of production wherever they want, and they have the right to hire and discharge for cause. When paragraph 8 was put in the International contract in 1948, that stopped the whole labor movement in this country." Workers' control of production is not some far-off Utopian dream, but is the immediate form of the concrete Humanism of working people.

hired by Delta to run the plant and run us, for the next two years. At the end of December 1996, either Seafresh or Delta Pride can terminate this agreement. If they don't it will run the full two years.

They won't tell us much about the company, they just say that they have a lot of experience with fish production in Canada, and that they have other plants with unions in them there. Our contract runs out in October; we are getting ready to negotiate a new one. But we don't know who we will be dealing with when it comes time to negotiate our contract—Seafresh or Delta Pride. Seafresh is acting like they are the ones in charge.

About ten of the Seafresh people are here now, taking over, running everything. All the supervision jumps when the Canadians say something, even Darry Adams, the plant manager. The top Canadian seems to be a man named David Bolivar. He says, "From now on, any meeting with the union, I have to be in on it. There will be a lot of changes." The Canadians look at workers turning out production and say: "You all ain't working!"

We have been working constant overtime, about 50 hours a week, ever since they closed down the Belzoni plant, on account of "lack of fish." They moved all the production that would have been done at Belzoni over here. Yet still they have cut the workers here at Delta Main. We are down to about 600, instead of 900. And we have to get out near the same production.

Now they have started trying to mess with the contract we have on when you get breaks and when you get lunch. We fought long and hard in the last contract to be sure that your break was in the middle of the time between starting and lunch, and your lunch was in the middle of your shift. They used to switch us all around, whenever they felt like it. Last week the Canadians said there was oil on the conveyor belt, so they wanted to stop for break time early. Then they said we were going to run out of fish, so they wanted to make us go to lunch at 11 a.m. Well, you can do it if there's an emergency, but they lied to us. They didn't run out of fish; we worked a full regular shift. They just wanted to show they could mess with us. I can see we are going to have to get ready for a big fight on the contract.

—Union activist, UFCW Local 1529

Mississippi/Tennessee readers:

Join striking workers
at Taylor Chair

March and rally in Clarksdale, Miss.

Saturday, June 22, 12 noon

Call IUE/Furniture Workers Local 282

for more information at (801) 725-1332

Hood layoffs target 282

Jackson, Miss.—At Hood Furniture the company is still refusing to recognize our union, IUE/Furniture Workers Local 282. And now they are trying everything they can to scare workers into dropping our support for 282. On May 22, they had a second layoff. The first one was in April, when they laid off about 20 workers. This time they laid off about 40 people. They didn't lay off by seniority either. People with three years, even five years, got put out of the plant, and people with only six months were kept on. Most of the layoffs were in the mill room and the cabinet room.

Along with the layoff notice, they gave workers a letter saying that they had a right to bump other employees with less seniority, but only if they can prove they know that job. Most workers are locked into one department at Hood; you can't know a job in another department if you never worked there. They say they are following the contract with local 797, what we call the "slave contract" they signed three years ago behind our backs.

Everyone knows why they are doing the layoffs now. They never did any layoffs in all the time Local 797 was pretending to be the representative. They only started laying off workers when 797 gave up and we got Local 282 back. In fact, right before Local 282 came back they had just hired a bunch of new workers; we were up to about 350 in the plant.

About two weeks ago Warren Hood's son Jimmy came out to the plant. He talked to the workers for about two minutes. He said that the only reason he had come was to say that the rumors about the plant closing were not true. "The plant will not close." But the ones who had been spreading rumors for months about the plant closing were Hood's own supervisors. Very few workers are fooled by this.

We are still going through hell at Hood Furniture. It is still raining in the plant whenever it rains outside. There are many injuries on the job. One woman was injured trying to lift a table by herself, after the foreman told another worker that he wasn't allowed to help her. She is still out.

The only way we are ever going to get justice at Hood Furniture is if we keep sticking together. We have been fighting so long, it seems like we will never get justice. And the "point system" at Hood is always there to get rid of workers if they aren't very careful. But we are still bound and determined to have a real contract with Local 282 as our union. The workers I know, we will never give up.

—Hood Furniture worker

Chopping cotton at Dobbs

Memphis, Tenn.—At Dobbs Catering, where we prepare and load food on airplanes, things are getting so bad. It used to be that when not driving or loading flights, we were on "down time." Now, instead of letting a driver and loader team do their job and then go on down time, they cut that team altogether and pass their flights to a second team, giving them more work. They won't let the first team even start their job and utilize them anyway they want.

They're just dogging the people who went on strike and won last year. The people who crossed the picket line do whatever they want to.

Part of the problem is that we've got a rat as Exterior Manager. The only way that Bobbie Woodard got that job was the employees and union helped him because, at that time, they didn't have any Blacks in a higher position. Now he is so low down he treats us like slaves. He forgot where he came from.

They harass people on every level, even to having supervisors put their fingers in your glass of cola and tell you it's not yours anyway. One worker needed surgery and they told her she could come to work or quit, so she had to quit. It's so bad I've even seen men with tears in their eyes. Working at Dobbs is worse than chopping cotton in Mississippi!

You try and do a job and you're harassed about everything and when you try to tell the union leaders they don't seem to understand and say it's petty. They started calling overtime when it's 5:45 a.m. and you haven't even punched the clock yet. Each supervisor wants the job done his way, instead of what's in the contract. And if you complain to Bobbie, he defends the supervisor. They have taken people off the shift they bid on, that should be theirs, and told them they couldn't have it. They make their rules and then break their rules.

It's all focused on union members, and yet the new Teamster team is no help at all. We were told when the new Teamsters president came in, we were going to do things by the contract. That's the only thing we ask. We have got to do something because they are skinning us alive. If the union would just stand on its feet, things could get a lot better. Otherwise, we're worried someone is going to get hurt here.

—Dobbs Catering workers

Staley fight in AFL-CIO

Decatur, Ill.—John Sweeney, president of the AFL-CIO, wants to wash his hands of the Staley struggle. So we made a black coffin and carried it to Madison, Wis., April 27 because Sweeney was there to give a talk the day before Workers Memorial Day.

We had a sign that read "Staley workers didn't die on the job. They were left to die on a picket line." When Sweeney got up to speak, we got up to picket. At least a couple hundred people were there to remember all those who have been killed by their jobs. He was there to push the Democratic Party agenda. This time it was to back the mayor of Madison who is running for Congress. Even the city workers hate this mayor because he won't resolve a contract dispute with them.

Most of the people in the crowd were workers. The union business agents there were upset because we had a bullhorn to make our point. We said, "The AFL-CIO doesn't tell us anything. Why was there no task force like we were promised? Why didn't the support from Sweeney ever materialize?"

Sweeney did meet with us and said he would get back with us—but he never did. That evening, our supporters in Madison continued to ask him questions, drilling his ass at a banquet. He got pissed off and left.

—Staley worker

Sinai Kosher cover-up

Chicago—The same day people saw the *News & Letters* article about us getting hurt ("Injuries at Sinai Kosher," May 1996), Lou the Sinai Kosher safety man came around to see if we were wearing ear plugs. Lou is the one who gave out those wrist braces that didn't do any good.

The following Sunday, he showed us a movie about carpal tunnel syndrome and arthritis. It just said that a job you do all day can hurt you, and that's why they have us rotate jobs. The film said if your wrists hurt to tell the supervisor.

You're working with your hands all day long. How are your hands going to rest? If you're rushing all the time, you're going to have strained wrists. Even if you rotate jobs, you're still going to break down—you're only human. It comes from repeating actions all the time, whether you've been doing it for 2 years or 11 years. And here we're always rushing no less than 8 hours a day, sometimes 10 and 12.

There's no chance to rest. Management is acting like they are concerned, but all the time they make you run. Every job is very fast-paced, and they never want to stop the machines or to slow down. Things can be done to make these jobs safe. If a person does the job, she knows what the problem is. If she makes a suggestion, though, management throws it away because they don't want to change. These hard jobs are done by underpaid women. They are the laborers at Sinai Kosher, but the men get the higher pay.

After we saw the movie, we had to sign and date something saying we saw it. They are scared about what people here really think about their injuries, and they wanted something on record to show the insurance company they are on top of it. Sinai Kosher management also doesn't want Sara Lee, which owns the company, to know about the problem.

—Sinai Kosher worker

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

Editor's note: As part of celebrating the forthcoming publication of a new edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* by Wayne State University Press, we here publish the final section of her 1985 speech, "Dialectics of Revolution and Women's Liberation." The section is entitled, "Unchaining the Dialectic Through 35 Years of Marxist-Humanist Writings Which Trace the Dialectics of Revolution in a New Work on Women's Liberation." In discussing how this collection of writings discloses the way Marxist-Humanism developed the dialectics of revolution for the specific realities facing women's liberation, it helps reveal the methodology of bringing dialectical philosophy to bear on all forces of revolution. The full text of the speech, given on Jan. 27, 1985, can be found in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of its World Development*, microfilm #8348.

The title for my lecture today has reversed the title of our new fourth book into "Dialectics of Revolution and of Women's Liberation," not just as something needed for this lecture, but as what is the actual focus of the whole "trilogy of revolution" as well as this latest philosophic work. Indeed, the Introduction to it—and an Introduction is really always also the Conclusion—is called "Introduction and Overview." It is that which I will try to summarize here as the unchaining of the dialectic for the post-World War II period, whether that is expressed in activities or books, in pamphlets or *News & Letters*, or as it is implicit throughout the Archives, as well.

It is this which reveals that, no matter what specific revolutionary force turns out to be the main one in any ongoing revolution, no one can know before time who it will be. Nothing proves this more sharply than Women's Liberation, because it has been an unrecognized and degraded force, rather than seen as a force that is simultaneously Reason. It is this which has made women question: "What happens after?"

In the main, Women's Liberationists refuse to accept anything which shows that "a man" decides. In actuality, what they are thereby rejecting is the dialectics of revolution. It is this burning question of our age which led me to subtitle this final section of my lecture: Unchaining the Dialectic.

First, let us look at the unchaining of the dialectic for our age by Marxist-Humanists. Our original contributions to Marx's Marxism can be seen in our first book, *Marxism and Freedom*, as the structure of the whole—the Movement from Practice. It is seen in our second work, *Philosophy and Revolution*, as the working out of the Absolute Idea for our age—Absolute Idea as New Beginning. In the third work, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, it is seen as the challenge to all post-Marx Marxists.

Secondly, let's see how Marx explained his return to the Hegelian dialectic in his very last decade: "My relationship with Hegel is very simple. I am a disciple of Hegel, and the presumptuous chatter of the epigones who think they have buried this great thinker appear frankly ridiculous to me. Nevertheless, I have taken the liberty of adopting...a critical attitude, disencumbering his dialectic of its mysticism and thus putting it through a profound change..." This is from the manuscripts for Volume II of *Capital* that Marx left, and that Engels left out.

Now let's look at the structure of our fourth book, still on the press, *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future*. What became obvious to me was that the four parts of this book turned out to be actual moments of revolution. Thus Part I, "Women, Labor and the Black Dimension," actually also includes Youth, as the four forces of revolution. I insisted in my Introduction that I was not presenting my writings chronologically because I wanted each topic to reflect, even if only implicitly, the totality of my views. Even that aspect does not tell the whole story about the relationship of the forces of revolution to the Reason of any revolution—i.e., how each one of the forces "reaches for the future." This was most clearly shown not only by the forces that actually made the revolution in Russia, but by those in Persia where the women in the revolution of 1906-11 had gone beyond even what they did in Russia itself by establishing a new form of organization, the women's anjumen (soviet). Today we spell this out as committee-form in place of "party-to-lead."

Part II, "Revolutionaries All," again shows the activists, the actual participants in revolutions. Whether or not they were conscious of actually being the history-makers, they were exactly that. And that section has the footnote which returns us to *Marxism and Freedom*, choosing the section that describes the milkmaids initiating the Paris Commune of 1871.

Part III, "Sexism, Politics and Revolution—Japan, Portugal, Poland, China, Latin America, the United States—Is there an Organizational Answer?" clearly illustrates both the positive internationalism and the very negative sexism in each country, whether East or West.

* The "trilogy of revolution" refers to Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom*, from 1776 until Today (1957); *Philosophy and Revolution*, from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao (1973); and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982).

Dialectics and Women's Liberation

Yet what the Introduction and Overview made clear was that the forces of revolution had to show their actual presence before the concretization of the dialectics of revolution would manifest itself.

Put differently, what the very first sentence of the first paragraph of the first page of the Introduction establishes is that first there must be a definition that is a concretization of the specific nature of your epoch. We had designated that as the movement from practice that is itself a form of theory, and we had arrived at that conclusion from the encounter with the Absolute Idea as being not just a unity of practice and theory, but a very new relationship of practice to theory. It is this which determined the whole structure of our very first major theoretical work, *Marxism and Freedom*. Only after this specific epoch and its historic content was grasped do we speak, in the second paragraph of the Introduction and Overview, about the uniqueness of one of the forces of revolution, Women's Liberation.

We now come to Part IV on "The Trail to the 1980s"—which is naturally the one that is key to any concretization of the present period. Our task is twofold: we have to catch the link of continuity with Marx's Marxism; and then make our own original contributions, which only the epoch in question can work out for itself. Marx opened the gates for us. Look at the way he treated his relationship to Hegel after he discovered his own New Continent of Thought and yet felt it important to return to the Hegelian dialectic. That was not to deny anything new. On the contrary—and contrary especially to all those who try to use the final decade of Marx's life to turn him into no more than a populist—the full 40 years of Marx's work, which saw the critic of the Hegelian dialectic become the philosopher of revolution and the author of *Capital*, prove that he continued his own very original development throughout his life, including the final decade, and that the new moments were no break with his very first new discovery.

Follow the dialectics of the development of Women as the new revolutionary force and Reason. Concretization, when it expresses a Universal that becomes Concrete, shows what Absolute Idea is as New Beginning. All the emphasis on "New Beginnings" pinpoints the task of an age. Absolute Idea is total, but it cannot be total as a quantitative measure. That is where the new in any epoch requires the living presence of that revolutionary force and not just a Promethean vision. That is not because Promethean vision and Reaching for the Future doesn't help the next generation to see its task. Quite the contrary. That is when discontinuity is not a revision of, but a continuation with, the original New Moment when there are all sorts of new voices and listening to them is quintessential.

It is only after the new world stage of practice is recognized that we get to that new revolutionary force of Women's Liberation, which has named the culprit—male chauvinism—as characterizing the revolutionary movement itself. That is to say, it is not only characteristic of capitalism, and not only of this epoch, but has existed throughout history. The point is not to stop there. But in order not to stop there, you have to recognize Women's Liberation as a force that is Reason and not just force—and that means a total uprooting of this society, and the creation of totally new human relations. Which is why Marx was not exclusively a feminist but a "new Humanist." The fact that feminism is part of Humanism

and not the other way around does not mean that Women's Liberation becomes subordinate. It means only that philosophy will not again be separated from revolution, or Reason separated from force. Even Absolute Method becomes only the "road to" Absolute Idea, Absolute Mind.

Let me end, then, with the final paragraph from the Introduction and Overview of our new, fourth book:

The Absolute Method allows for no "private enclaves"—i.e., exceptions to the principle of Marx's Dialectics, whether on the theoretical or the organizational questions. As Marx insisted from the very beginning, nothing can be a private enclave: neither any part of life, nor organization, nor even science. In his *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, he proclaimed that: "To have one basis for life and another for science is a priori a lie."

And now that we have both the *Ethnological Notebooks* and the *Mathematical Manuscripts* from Marx's last years, where he singled out the expression "negation of the negation," we can see that that is the very same expression he used in 1844 to explain why Feuerbach was a vulgar materialist in rejecting it, and Hegel was the creative philosopher. As we concluded in the Introduction and Overview to *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*, on Marx's 1844 declaration on science and life:

The truth of this statement has never been more immediate and urgent than in our nuclear world, over which hangs nothing short of the threat to the very survival of civilization as we have known it.

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Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution

Reaching for the
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Part I
Women, Labor and the Black
Dimension

Part II
Revolutionaries All

Part III
Sexism, Politics and Revolution
— Japan, Portugal, Poland, China,
Latin America, the U.S. — Is
There an Organizational Answer?

Part IV
The Trail to the 1980s: The
Missing Link — Philosophy — in
Relationship of Revolution to
Organization

Essay Article

by Peter Hudis

Beyond Capital: Towards a Theory of Transition, by Istvan Meszaros (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1995)

It is a rare occasion to come across a book which so directly and comprehensively confronts the central problem of our time. In this 1,000 page opus, Istvan Meszaros brings 30 years of theoretic reflection to bear on the need to combat the prevailing notion that there is no alternative to existing capitalism. He tries to do so by outlining a "theory of transition" which can help envision what happens after the revolution.

DEFINING THE PRESENT CRISIS

To get a handle on the thrust of this massive work, it may help to focus on two seemingly opposed statements of Marx, which Meszaros cites. The first is Marx's statement, "It is not enough for thought to strive for realization; reality must itself strive toward thought." This expresses Marx's view that the idea of freedom can be realized only on the basis of the material conditions and social struggles of present-day reality. The second is Marx's statement, "theory itself becomes a material force when it seizes the masses." This expresses Marx's view that ideas not only reflect present-day reality, but also play a key role in helping to transform it.

As Meszaros sees it, in Marx's day and through much of this century, thought strove for realization in the form of socialist movements which consciously sought to overturn capitalism. However, reality failed to strive toward thought in that the expansion of capitalism did not result in a worldwide socialist revolution. The reason for this, Meszaros contends, is that "the viability of capital is inseparable from its full expansion into an all-embracing world system. Only when this process is accomplished can the structural limits of capital come into play" (p. 485). So long as capitalism still had "hidden continents" to penetrate, he says, it was able to prevent its inner antagonisms from coming to the surface.

The situation today, on the other hand, is totally reversed. Capitalism is reaching the limits of its global expansion and its inner antagonisms are everywhere surfacing. As Meszaros shows, for the past two decades capitalism has been in a "depressed continuum" characterized by an "endemic, permanent, structural crisis" (p. 597). In this sense, reality is moving toward thought. However, he argues that thought is no longer striving for realization, in that the limitations of the radical movements have turned masses of people away from the very idea of socialism. The failure of Social Democracy and Stalinism to liberate humanity from the power of capital has created the impression that there is no alternative to actually existing capitalism.

Meszaros rightly argues that unless we overcome today's crisis in envisioning the abolition of capital, no effort to change society will bear fruit. Waiting for the crises of the system to deepen, or relying on the material conditions to bring about a turnaround, makes little sense given the present historic moment.

As he puts it, "It is not too difficult to point to crisis symptoms that foreshadow the breakdown of the established socioeconomic and political order. However, in and of itself the profound structural crisis of the capital system is very far from being enough to inspire confidence in a successful outcome. The pieces must be picked up and put together in due course in a positive way. And not even the gravest crisis or the most severe breakdowns are of much help by themselves in that respect."

"It is always incomparably easier to say 'no' than to draw even the bare outlines of a positive alternative to the negated object. Only on the basis of a coherent strategic view of the overall social complex can even a partial negation of the existent be considered plausible or legitimate" (pp. xvii-xviii).

Since "even the most radical negation remains in dependency on the object of its critique," the negation of existing society must now be defined "as a subordinate moment of the positive project" of spelling out the alternative to capital itself (p. 793).

Meszaros is well aware of the profound difficulties which this involves. The collapse of societies that called themselves "socialist," as well as the failure of a host of revolutionary movements in the Third World, clearly show that without the radical restructuring of every single domain touched by capitalism, the domination of capital cannot be overcome. As against putting issues of gender and race on the back burner, "capital must be superseded in the totality of its relations" (p. 609). Otherwise, it cannot be changed.

He is also well aware of the folly of drawing up blueprints of the future or issuing moral imperatives about how the new society "ought" to be. He instead wants to conceptualize the "material mediations" needed to effect the transition from a revolutionary seizure of power to the abolition of capital. Most of his book, however, consists of a detailed critique of those who fail to conceptualize such a transcendence of alienation.

THE RETREAT FROM DIALECTICS

Of all the thinkers critiqued by Meszaros, none figures more prominently than Georg Lukacs, whom many consider the foremost Hegelian-Marxist of the twentieth century. He devotes several hundred pages to Lukacs, because Meszaros sees in his limitations an explanation for why it has proven so hard to conceptualize the abolition of capital.

The key problem as he sees it is that Lukacs posed class consciousness as the deciding factor in bridging the gap between the realities of the present and the social forms of the future. Lukacs so overstressed the con-

'Beyond Capital': Envisioning a new society

sciousness of the proletariat that he equated it to the Hegelian identity of subject and object. Meszaros correctly shows that this involved Lukacs in a thorny contradiction.

For if the proletariat equals the Hegelian identity of subject and object, how does one explain the gap between the workers' present-day consciousness and the idea of a new society? To answer this, Lukacs developed his famous theory of reification, which states that it isn't only labor which is reified, or turned into a thing; under capitalism your mind also gets reified.

Though Meszaros does not mention it, Lukacs' notion deviates from Marx. To Marx what gets reified at the point of production is not labor, or the laborer, let alone the human being's thought. What is made into a thing is the capacity to labor, or labor-power. This is fundamental to Marx, because in this way he shows that the process of reification is confronted by the subjectivity of the living laborer, whose mind and muscle resists this "process of suction."

By conflating labor and labor-power, on the other hand, Lukacs made it hard to see how reification can be overcome through the masses' self-activity. If even our



China: "postcapitalist capital-producing society"?

thought is reified, how are we going to free ourselves? Lukacs had a ready answer: The Party will free you, by serving as the "knowing" of the proletariat.

Meszaros sharply attacks this fetishism of the Party, by linking it to a deeper problem: the failure to envision the actual "material mediations" needed in order to surmount the hierarchies of class society. By laboring under "the illusion that theoretical illumination—the work of consciousness upon consciousness—can produce the required structural changes in social reality" (p. 360), Lukacs failed to spell out how the domination of labor by capital can actually be overcome. As a result, he ended up concluding that the reduction of concrete to abstract labor under the regimen of the factory clock continues to operate under socialism.

The real object of Meszaros' critique, however, is not Lukacs, but Hegel. For as he sees it, Hegel's concept of the unified subject-object "is fully committed to the standpoint of capital" (p. 350). On the basis of Hegel's political writings, he tries to show that Hegel "adopted the standpoint of capital as the absolute horizon of history" (p. 5). The failure of Lukacs to envision the pathway by which to overcome the domination of labor by capital, he argues, flows from Lukacs' deep-rootedness in the Hegelian dialectic!

Thus, instead of building on how Hegel's concept of absolute negativity contains (as Marx put it) an "estranged insight" into the transcendence of the capital-form, Meszaros retreats from Hegelian dialectics altogether. He instead calls on radical theory to obtain a "firmer material footing" by abandoning Hegelian philosophy in favor of a "strategic view of the social complex."

This marks a retreat from Meszaros' earlier position, as stated in 1983: "The speculative verbal supersession of philosophy by 'Theory,' 'Theoretical Practice' and the like, can only lead to a conservative rejection of the unity of theory and practice and to the sceptical dismissal of Marx's values as unrealizable dreams."*

So why does Meszaros now retreat from philosophy? Why does he so totally reject Hegel, when Hegel's concept that all forward movement proceeds through the "negation of the negation" supplies so much ground for grappling with "what happens after?" The reason is that he is so overburdened with the way even Hegelian-Marx-

ists like Lukacs failed to envision a transcendence of the capital-form that he concludes the root of the problem lies in Hegel's idealism. On this basis he praises Engels' reflection-theory of knowledge, on the grounds that only by wedding thought to the contours of the actual material conditions can the alternative to the capital-form be posed.

In a word, instead of posing cognition that not only reflects the objective world but creates it as the key to working out the question of "what happens after the revolution," Meszaros turns away from dialectics of philosophy in order to secure a "firmer material base."

Herein lies the objectivity of Meszaros' approach. The failure of even those Marxists who did emphasize Hegelian dialectics to produce any significant results when it comes to answering "what happens after" the revolution, has now led to an effort to dispense with the dialectics of philosophy itself. Far from being true only of Meszaros, this tendency is deeply rooted in the terrain of today's objective situation.

TRANSITION? OR ABSOLUTE LIBERATION?

The ramifications of Meszaros' retreat from Hegelian dialectics, and indeed from philosophy itself, become especially telling when he takes up Marx's work.

His book creatively explores Marx, in showing that social change to him meant "an ongoing, consistently self-critical social revolution, i.e., permanent revolution" (p. 792). This is especially true, he says, of *The Critique of the Gotha Program* (1875), in which Marx critiqued his followers for narrowing social change to the mere political overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

Moreover, Meszaros sees Marx's *Critique* as speaking directly to "the organization question." He writes: "Marx saw the organizational question as 1) remaining faithful to socialist principles, and 2) devising viable and flexible programs of action" (p. 695). To Meszaros, this calls for "a conscious strategic articulation of a socialist pluralism."

What Meszaros fails to draw out, however, is that Marx's insistence on the inseparability of "principles" and organization implies the need for organization to be grounded in a philosophy of revolution. He fails to draw this out, because Meszaros does not see the *Critique* as part of Marx's overall development of a philosophy of "revolution in permanence."

This is especially seen from Meszaros' rather curt dismissal of Marx's last decade (1875-83). He says "the intellectual production of his last 15 years bears no comparison to the previous decade and a half"—thereby skipping over such crucial works as Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks*, in which Marx dug into indigenous societies, technologically underdeveloped nations, and the peasantry. As Raya Dunayevskaya has shown, Marx's deep probing into these issues in his last decade was part of his effort to project how deep, total and continuous must be the very concept of revolution.

Yet instead of digging into this fruitful ground, Meszaros singles out what he calls "Marx's missing mediations"—by which he means that Marx all too often failed to specify the many "material mediations" needed to effect the transition from the political overthrow of the bourgeoisie to the abolition of capital.

There is no doubt that the capital-form cannot be defeated in one blow in the immediate aftermath of a revolution. But how is one to work out the pathway to its abolition, if the depth and breadth of Marx's call for a total uprooting remains unarticulated?

It is hard to avoid the impression that by skipping over this, Meszaros narrows his own effort to envision "what happens after." For he actually rarely discusses specific forms of mediation needed to abolish capital. And even when he does, he has relatively little to say about transforming relations of production, stressing instead that, "The existing material articulation of production relations remains basically unchanged in the aftermath of any socialist revolution, even under the most favorable historical conditions" (p. 368). On the other hand, he has more to say about transforming exchange relations, which he calls "the 'archimedean point' of the whole complex of mediatory strategies" (p. 758). He even says that because of the "fragmentation" characterizing the working class, "for a long time after the revolution they will need a strong executive over against themselves" (p. 930).

When all is said and done, it is not surprising that the readers may feel they haven't gained much concrete illumination on the question of "what happens after"—and feel even further from having in hand Marx's concept of a total uprooting restated for our day.

What may well explain some of these limitations is

(continued on page 10)

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*See "Marx 'Philosophy,'" by Istvan Meszaros, in *The History of Marxism: Vol. 1, Marxism in Marx's Day*, ed. by Eric J. Hobsbawm (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982). See also Raya Dunayevskaya's review of this in "Hobsbawm and Rubel on the Marx Centenary, but where is Marx?", in *News & Letters*, August-September 1982.

VOICES OF OPPOSITION TO PRISON WAREHOUSING

Gerard Emmett's lead on the "new voices of opposition to prison warehousing of the poor" (May N&L) powerfully connected the L.A. Rebellion and current racist beatings, as well as the anti-immigrant events in this country, to the prison phenomenon, in such a way that it shows what is new in this phenomenon today. While the comparison to the gulag is strong and true, the very fact that prisoners make up 2% of the labor force shows where the new phenomenon fits into high-tech capitalism.

John Marcotte
New York

* * *

There seems a hunger to lock people up now. Soon there will be ten times as many people in prison as in the 1970s and one in three Black men are in the justice system. The pamphlet written by prisoners that N&L is helping with, mentioned in Gerard Emmett's lead, is really important if there is some way to show what is going on today in an historical perspective. It's a question of mental oppression when prisoners say they can't believe in the good of all. That's what the idea of freedom can motivate, that something can be found or created that is for the good of all. The negativity prisoners feel against the system opens doors to the positive.

Jim Guthrie
Chicago

* * *

I am a 35-year-old African-American who by lack of the will to make a better "life choice" landed in prison for the second time. I was first arrested at the age of 26, and up until then I had been a model citizen who was upwardly mobile and a success against all odds. I like to write because it is the only means for me to keep my human spirit alive. I'm not a jailhouse poet or a big neo-intellectual. I'm just an average guy trying to heal the wounds (self-inflicted) and move on to better things.

One thing people don't necessarily understand is that just because you're in prison, it doesn't mean that rational abilities become nil. I can't speak for the whole prison populace, but I can readily state that there is something much bigger going on as far as the condition of prisoners is concerned.

Prisoner
New York

* * *

When I read the quote from the Kansas inmate on the mentality of the correctional system that views prison as business, I couldn't help thinking of the mentality of the university where I teach, where 250 are enrolled in the criminal justice program, without which the university could not survive. Other universities across the country have these same programs that employ lots of faculty and are competing for students to train them for correctional institutions. Nearby they are planning a \$60 million maximum security prison.

University professor
Illinois

* * *

On May 19, the strikers' paper, *Sunday Journal*, supported the Archer administration's plan to charge fees for vehicles entering Belle Isle Park. This is bad enough. But the same editorial that points out that Recreation Department (unionized) staff has been cut in half since 1990 states: "We'd like to see the city make use of the Wayne County Alternative Work Force as a regular Monday Morning clean-up crew." In other words, have slave labor replace union jobs! The "Alternative Work Force" is comprised of prisoners, parolees, and probationers working off their sentences in "community service" jobs.

A few city workers told me they don't support the newspaper strike because the newspapers didn't support theirs a few years back. And now we see a call to pit paid labor against unpaid workers.

Working woman
Detroit

* * *

The feminization of poverty, the refusal of women to see their children starve, the proliferation of drugs, and the deadly combination of racism and sexism has meant that the number of women arrested for felonies went from 12,331 in 1960 to 62,936 in 1992. Since 1992 the percent of women imprisoned is nearly double the increase in men jailed—275%. The damage this does to them and their approximately 167,000

children is unfathomable. These kinds of statistics and the lives they represent are graphic proof of the total failure of U.S. capitalism to care for its own population.

Terry Moon
Memphis

* * *

In our computer age, putting the prison contract lease system into private hands means prisoners don't even have to leave the prison to implement it. With data processing offshore, travel agency work can now be handled by prisoners in Oklahoma. JC Penney contracts credit department work to prisons. The great demand of the Northern labor movement was for no competition from slave or prison labor against "free" labor. Whatever happened to that principle?

Warehouse worker
Illinois

* * *

Explosive Thoughts

I feel as though I'm a dented cardboard box stuffed full of dynamite stored in a large dump warehouse surrounded by land mines waiting to explode on moments notice.

Just append a minutest of spark and watch our red hot rage become that devastating, sensational show nobody could possibly ignore in our plea for release.

D.A. Sheldon
Iowa State Penitentiary

A NOTE ON CHINA/TAIWAN

The recent moves by the Chinese government against Taiwan was no game. They are very serious about getting Taiwan back and they are willing to go to war over it if necessary. Inside China quite a number of intellectuals who supported the democracy movement are now saying we can't push so fast for democracy, because the primary objective has to be to reunify the country. The regime knows how deep-rooted are the Chinese people's desires for unification, and they are trying to make use of it.

Chinese exile
California



A WIN FOR THE UFW

It's heartening to have a "win" for the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO in these devastating times of increased worker exploitation and lay-offs, bureaucratic unionism, etc. Muranaka Farm, a huge vegetable grower in Moorpark, Cal., claimed workers at their Lamont fields were not covered by the UFW contract. The Agricultural Labor Relations Board ruled that the contract protects all farm workers at Muranaka, no matter where they work in California. So 45 more farm working families no longer have to struggle with subminimum or bare minimum wages. It's the first contract in the Lamont area in over 20 years.

Sheila
N.Y.

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE

We have seen several issues of your paper and are interested in your work, especially your efforts to coordinate liberation philosophy with concrete revolutionary practice. We are a left social philosophy youth group and take an active part in our student union. We also support the self-defense workers' movement, which is, unfortunately, still very weak in the Ukraine.

In order to tell others about your experience, we have translated several articles from N&L which will be published in the next issue of a discussion magazine, *Zvit*. Can you send us more information about your activity and works on philosophy so we can share it with *Zvit* readers?

Libertarian group
Ukraine

Readers' Views

Thank you very much for the news and analyses regarding the situation and development of the working class struggle in various parts of the world. These have helped us gain a wider perspective on the problems and situation of workers. The workers in our country, more so within the sphere of services, are now actively pursuing solidarity among workers, although there are still barriers towards the development of labor unity in our country.

On the international level, we likewise note that worker solidarity is now being pushed through, particularly by some of the larger labor organizations. We would like to see more updates on the solidarity formations among labor organizations appear in your paper.

V.B.
The Philippines

LESSONS OF THE PARIS COMMUNE

I like what Maya Jhansi wrote on the Paris Commune in the March issue, that all relationships were re-defined, from man/woman to workers, as well as the relationships of the state and commodities. It is sad that this history isn't better covered in school. Not only do we have to worry about government crushing us, but about becoming co-opted ourselves.

Dan
Detroit

THE OTHER ISRAEL

Ari Shavit's powerful piece in the *New York Times*, "How Easily We Killed Them," was absolutely right in calling Israel's killings in Lebanon an outright massacre, and he was right in charging that it didn't fill the streets with protests. But the article by Gila Svirsky in your May issue allowed the admittedly small voices that did protest, especially of the women's peace movement, to be heard loud and clear in your pages. Those voices went unreported anywhere else that I could see, just as the protests by thousands of Palestinians against the suicide bombings, which she included in her report, were virtually unnoticed by the mass media. You were right to say in your Appeal that it is urgent to keep N&L alive.

Supporter
Illinois

* * *

I don't know why it was shocking to me that the Peace Now demonstrators made Gila Svirsky stand apart. It isn't that I haven't met such stupidity from the Left here in the U.S. But what, then, were they marching for? Why march for peace if you want innocent people's homes destroyed and parents shot for the crimes of their children?

I have often thought of the tenuous unity of Jewish and Arab women as the kind of Reason that can help create a different, human world. It is something I look for every March 8 when Women in Black demonstrate together.

Women's liberationist
Memphis

* * *

The last two issues of N&L were very helpful in presenting the "other Israel"—with Adam Keller's report in the April issue of the peace demonstrations by both Israelis and Arabs and Gila Svirsky's moving personal account in the May issue. These beautiful sentiments aren't coming out of nowhere. The Marxist-Humanist archives document a revolutionary history of that entire region, as well as the counter-revolutionary movement.

Urszula Wislanka
California

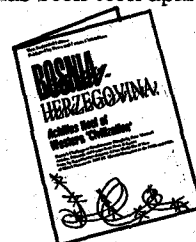
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Editor's note: Selections from *Raya Dunayevskaya's Writings on the Middle East*, consisting of ten of her Political-Philosophic Letters from the 1960s through the 1980s, is available from N&L for \$2.50 plus \$1 postage.

Many of the writers in N&L are trying to work out an independent position. It is seen in the woman who wrote about

"bombs and revenge" vs. "hope." She shows tremendous dignity in keeping her humanity in a difficult situation. You have to work out what it means to be human. One of the main questions that has come out of the Bosnian events is what has happened to the idea of multiculturalism. How do you take a stand for that when the whole country has been torn apart?

Marxist-Humanist
San Francisco



BOSNIA'S STRUGGLE

The same day I received your material about Bosnia, there was more front page news about increased Serbian hostility toward Bosnian Muslims. Yet I remain optimistic as long as organizations such as your continue to work for socially responsible action in Bosnia. The significance of Bosnia is an urgent question.

New reader
California

* * *

I hope your book, *Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles heel of Western 'Civilization'*, reaches a wide audience because the content is so important and the analysis will make sense to many. My only concern is whether the language might have been "translated" into more common expressions for greater appeal. If doing so risked violating your principles, ethic, and style it would not, however, have been worth it.

Bosnia supporter
Los Angeles

* * *

The Bosnia pamphlet is powerful. We need to get it known. It isn't just to take to Bosnia events — not because there may not be any more by now, but because Bosnia is not all that it is about.

Committee member
New York

WHO READS N&L?

I wish there was a way we could make a drastic change in welfare. It cannot be done by demonizing women on welfare. We need to talk about what people's needs are and why they are on welfare. I am not a socialist because I don't know enough about it. But the ideas of justice and fairness in your paper do appeal to me.

Black woman child care worker
Chicago

* * *

Your publication is magnificent. I especially like the first-hand reports from the shops. A little theory goes a long way, even if pertinent and relevant.

Academic dean
Lancaster, Pa.

* * *

The law of hate and punishment (law and order) is being pushed here. They are moving prisoners all over the place and the word is out that they are really going to turn this camp into a total "control unit." It means physical and psychological control over the prisoners. We know how it will come out. Hate and punishment can only bring more hate and open war between two sides.

Over the years I have received more information and knowledge from N&L than any paper or magazine I ever heard of. Thank you for showing readers who the real criminals are.

Prisoner
Illinois

* * *

N&L keeps me informed about events around the world which otherwise would remain unnoticed. Moreover, it gives me courage to face the reality in life. I want correspondence with women in America who are engaged in uplifting women's status.

Philosophy educator
India

HAVE YOU SENT YOUR CONTRIBUTION
TO HELP KEEP N&L IN THE FIGHT?
WE NEED YOUR HELP TO CONTINUE!

LIFE IN RACIST, SEXIST, EXPLOITATIVE AMERICA

I never heard about environmental racism and environmental justice before reading about it in N&L. It broadens the picture and makes me think about how everything is interconnected. That's the key. Until people are ready to pay attention to issues like toxic dumping in poor neighborhoods, as long as the environmental movement's tone remains the same, it will go nowhere. The mainstream movements are basically informed by capitalism. It's a very class-specific movement.

Long-time environmentalist
Chicago

B. Ann Lastelle's column on supporting women at Mitsubishi (May N&L) was terrific. Lastelle put what happened to the women at Mitsubishi in a larger context and I thought it was brilliant the way she brought out the similarity between what happened to the women at Mitsubishi and women on welfare. Her columns are always thought out and thought through. Her last point about sexual harassment being the past and that what is at stake in supporting the women is nothing less than the future of the workers' movement is, I'm very sure, unique.

Women's Liberationist
Memphis

I noticed on the news that a lot of white Americans are complaining about the Mexicans taking their jobs. It used to be just Blacks and whites fighting. Now the whites will be fighting Mexicans. My husband drives a truck and drops supplies at construction sites and he sees the contractors house the Mexicans in these little bitty trailers where the contractor gives them food and shelter. They don't have a car or anything. They hide their checks from my husband but always want to know what he makes. They aren't allowed to talk about their pay. They are using the same strategy with the Mexicans that they used with the Blacks years ago.

Black woman worker
South USA

We have a new curfew law that now charges parents if it's violated. This was the same town that watched while Staley and Firestone went to rotating shifts, thinking it would be good for competition. I'm a single parent. I can't be at work and with my kids at the same time. It means I'm being penalized for being a mother and having to work.

Staley worker
Decatur

It is not affirmative action which "divides." It is racism which divides. And so long as there is racism we must have programs like affirmative action which can aid those victimized by it. Many whites still do not understand that. Maybe even some Blacks don't understand it. The fact remains that class relations in this country have always been shaped by racial relations. We can't get rid of the first without transforming the second.

Feminist
Illinois

The interview on "60 Minutes" with William Pierce, the author of the "Turner Diaries," was highly disturbing. The book is the "Bible" of the right wing militias across America and the American version of "Mein Kampf." It states openly that the author's aims are to get rid of Jews, Blacks, Mexicans and other "unwanted" elements of American society. What does it mean that an edition of 60,000 additional copies was just published (by a Jewish publisher)?

This program was being aired at the same time that "Nightline" was devoting a whole week to the horrible conditions under which the close to 30 million Blacks live in the U.S. (out of whom close to a million already live behind bars). Add to this the increasing ranks of the jobless, and those living in hopeless conditions below the poverty line, and you begin to see the need for an openly fascist-style dictatorship to keep the restless subdued.

Dissident
Vancouver

There is a glaring contradiction in the way the workers produce everything and the capitalist nothing, and yet the workers receive only what is necessary to survive and the capitalist appropriates all the rest of the surplus value produced. These thieves just keep on blaming the irrationalities in their system on "feudal vestiges" or on governmental interference. The Republicans keep insisting that big government is what's causing welfare, hunger, youth killing each other. How long is it going to take before everyone is conscious that our miseries are caused by one thing: capitalism?

Revolutionary retiree
California



INDIGNANT
HEART

I cannot remember reading a book that left me with more knowledge and feeling than *Indignant Heart* by Charles Denby. I'm guessing that I learned about Mrs. Parks and the bus boycott, in Junior High School, but I'm not sure. After reading Denby I feel that not enough time was ever spent on the subject. I have received more information from this book than any classroom has ever given me. It showed me that if people are willing to stand together and fight for what they believe in, they are capable of achieving their dreams.

Student of labor economics
New York

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Thanks for defending the rights of your correspondents to remain anonymous, if they choose. By the way, Mr. "Curious, proud and unafraid radical" failed to sign his name.

Ex-exile
Canada

FIGHTING
GLOBAL
SEXISM



Some 200 mail order bride organizations operate in this country, especially in Texas and California, luring Filipina women to the U.S. with promises of TV-land lives. An estimated 2,000-3,500 wives come here through their catalogs each year. The women find themselves exploited, isolated or abused, and chained to their husbands by fear of deportation. A recent meeting of New York Gabriela Network discussed why the bride business has flourished: Filipinas appeal to the racist, sexist view of Asian women as docile, and also speak English. One woman said quite a number of white supremacists order brides! Many of the brides are desperately poor, and their government allows the companies to recruit there.

Gabriela supporter
New York

After more than 20 years of political and legal controversies the German Bundestag (parliament) voted a law which punishes sexual violence in marriage. The bill had been proposed by the government and was passed by only a tiny majority: 318 votes for, 306 against, with two abstentions. It was immediately criticized because it contains a provision which allows the wife to retire her accusation and thus to block criminal proceedings against the husband. There are fears that the wife could be subjected to pressure by her husband.

It is this part of the law the Social Democrats and the Greens fought against without success; the chancellor's Christian Democrats and Christian Socialists have won. The majority is satisfied on one point: while the previous law regarded sexual violence in marriage as "enforcing sexual relations" which would punish the violator with only a minor sentence, the present law provides two years in prison.

Male feminist
Prague

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Black/Red View

by John Alan

In this post-Civil Rights Movement era the focus and meaning of civil rights has shifted far from the original reason African Americans took to the streets and courts in the 1950s and 1960s to break down two centuries of racial segregation and discrimination. In California the so-called "revolt of angry white men" has been able to get on the November ballot a "California Civil Rights Initiative" (CCRI). If approved by the voters, "race" could no longer be used as one of the reasons for admission to public institutions of higher learning, thus abolishing affirmative action and closing the doors of the universities to many African-American students.

The conservative backers of the CCRI tell the voters that their Initiative "draws its language from the Civil Rights Act of 1964." On the face of it this is true, but it's only a ploy. They call it a "civil rights" initiative to conceal its racist purpose and then they have it read: "The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education or public contracting." This is the usual abstract talk about practicing equality without rooting out race and sex inequalities.

California's so-called civil rights initiative is a part of the new national movement to end affirmative action permanently. A number of state legislatures and cities have passed laws and ordinances to abolish it and the Supreme Court is expected to rule soon on the constitutionality of their acts.

Of course affirmative action was never a solution for the socio-economic crisis in the African-American community. But that doesn't mean that one can ignore the threatening power of a "color-blind" racism. For example, last June the Supreme Court struck down a plan to racially balance a school in Missouri. Chief Justice William Rehnquist told the district court that its goal was not to achieve racial balance because once the effect of legal segregation is over it "would be perfectly legal for the district to run schools that happened to be all black or all white." Justice Clarence Thomas supported the Chief Justice adding, "the Constitution does not prevent individuals from choosing to live together, to work together, or to send their children to school together, so long as the State does not interfere with their choices on the basis of race."

No longer management and proud of it!

Vicksburg, Miss.—My name is Sedrick Gardner. I'm a 35-year-old Black Man. I was raised by my grandmother and mother taught morals and a work ethic.

I started off as a supplemental cleaner in fast food to help put myself through college, and worked my way up to a general manager. I got married to a white woman, had three children, and we separated eventually. Later I got a job at Wendy's as assistant manager. Recently I got a retroactive raise. I was told by others it was because of an EEOC lawsuit against the company for discriminatory hiring.

When I extended my hand to the area manager, Mike Weimers, to thank him for the raise, he squeezed it to the point of pain. He's 6'2" and weighs 275 pounds. He caught me off guard even though that day he had remarked to another manager, "Y'all let anything walk into this store"—and he was referring to me!

I noticed that Mr. Weimers had a pamphlet that had been left for me by the Rainbow Society, a group that helps interracial couples and their children deal with discrimination. I found my personal life was being discussed when an employee said, "I didn't know you were married to a white female and had three kids!"

I was stocking the drive-through area and Weimers was coming down the hall. I lifted my head to say good evening, and before I could say it he kicked me so hard I lost my balance and had to catch myself to keep from falling on the floor. He never said anything.

I was furious, I wanted to jump him, but I suppressed it. It was so humiliating I didn't even tell my mother. In four weeks' time I deteriorated and got sick.

We had a stock problem they tried to blame on me. Then my ex-general manager said she got a call asking her had I been stealing. They threw my expense report from a trip to Memphis in the trash can. I had been waiting on my check and the accounting department finally told me they had never received the report. Then someone started a rumor that I had dyslexia.

The last four days I worked I had an enlarged prostate and a severe kidney infection. I didn't sleep for four days, I stopped eating, just kept drinking coffee. I worked 32 hours in two days, I worked nine days straight, worked a month and half with only five off days.

I didn't want to face the fact that this was about race. I tried to close my eyes and hoped it would go away. It ate at me and I had homicidal and suicidal thoughts. I took \$3,000 of company funds and spent it at one slot machine. Right was wrong and wrong was right. I was hospitalized for two weeks, given anti-depressants, and put on medication for the prostate and kidney infection. I didn't care about anything.

I haven't worked in seven months, I just try to get through each day. I had to tell Weimers what I had done, and asked could I pay it back? I know that money has been mishandled by whites and it was either covered up or they were given the opportunity to replace the money. I could have paid the money back, but they wanted to

'Color blind' racism posed as 'civil rights'

This opinion of Justice Clarence Thomas can not be simply considered a random statement from an individual member of the highest court in this country because it fits perfectly with the prevailing mood of white racism—a racism so subtly powerful that it has as yet to generate a serious force of opposition. The Clinton administration has capitulated to this new racism's "moral values" by attacking welfare and welfare mothers. The African-American middle class has treated this capitulation as just another conservative opposition to liberalism.

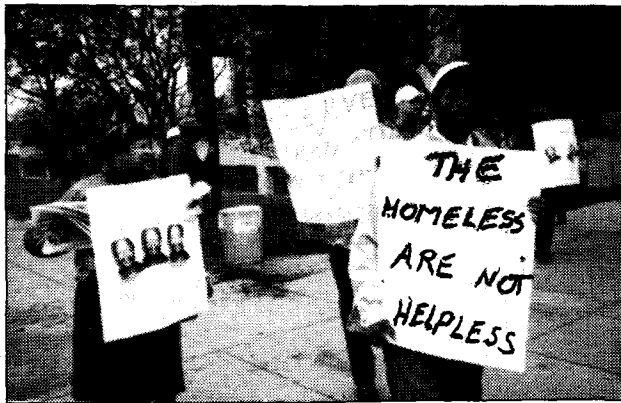
In less than four years, a new century will begin. It is appropriate to ask: will this new century see the end of racism? Or, instead, will the 1832 prediction of Alexis de Tocqueville prevail: "...the prejudice which repels the

Negroes seems to increase in proportion as they are emancipated, and inequality is sanctioned by manners while it is effaced from the laws of the country."

De Tocqueville's observations and insights have the obviousness of an historic truth, but it is still necessary to show that the intractability of America's racism is rooted in the super-exploitation of Black labor starting with slave labor, then moving on to sharecropping and then to unskilled mass production labor. And now it has reached this era of high-tech, where Black labor has become redundant labor, permanently unemployed, living in the decaying enclaves of former industrial cities. In a sense, the history of African Americans is a three century experience in a process that Marx called "the general absolute law of capitalist accumulation" and its various forms of racism.

Today, the struggle against racism is no longer an issue of sitting in the back of the bus, getting Black representation in government and in businesses, or seeing African Americans on television or in the movies. These "reforms," as superficial as they now appear, have created a mutual relationship between the Black middle-class leaders and the centers of white power. This has both confused and neutralized expressions of Black mass opposition to racism. If masses do engage in spontaneous protest there is always a Black politician or leader ready to intervene and neutralize it, i.e., bring it within the bound of proper political protest. In other words, there is no real unity of purpose and thought between leaders and masses that made the early days of the Civil Rights Movement so unique.

Justice for Joe Gould!



News & Letters

Chicago—Fifty homeless men and women, all sellers of *Streetwise* newspaper, demonstrated at the steps of the Cook County Circuit Court on May 9. The protesters demanded that the state not back off of prosecution of Gregory Becker, a white off-duty Chicago cop who witnesses say shot and killed Joseph Gould, a Black homeless man and *Streetwise* vendor, July 30, 1995. Police abuse activists also demonstrated May 16 at a fundraising event in downtown Chicago for State's Attorney Jack O'Malley, well-known for shielding Becker and other police involved in killings of Blacks and Latinos.

press charges.

I have a lawyer who is waiting on the outcome of an EEOC investigation of me being kicked which was seen by another employee. I'm still on anti-depressant medication and going to church every Sunday, and going to support groups. But now I want the public to know. I lost my dignity and I want to get it back.

I used to be against affirmative action, but no more. Now I feel we need laws to make affirmative action stronger. I've seen women, Blacks, youth discriminated against. When you get into management you have to keep your mouth shut because you're supposed to protect the company. I've learned the hard way how wrong that is.

Black World

(continued from page 1)

Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, and former public relations liaison for the Clinton administration, Avis Lavelle, heading up its public relations office. Needless to say, none of the awards given at the "Gala" were for reporting on environmental racism.

More astonishing, however, was the presence of Shell Oil, the memory still fresh of its complicity in the savage hanging of the famous Nigerian writer and environmentalist Ken Saro-Wiwa, Nov. 10. In the case of Shell, the CABJ cannot claim its usual ignorance. The Association's president, local WNBC anchorman Warner Saunders, was made aware of the conflict of conscience and interest, regarding Shell's corporate sponsorship of the CABJ "Gala" in the face of a worldwide campaign against Shell.

But the CABJ is not the only, or even the most important, Black institution guilty of shameless complicity in the ecological genocide of Black people in Africa and the U.S. Recent issues of Louis Farrakhan's newspaper, *The Final Call*, have articulated the Nation of Islam's support of the fascist military regime in Nigeria. Moreover, in its May 28 issue, *The Final Call* reports on the current debate in the Congressional Black Caucus, Black America's highest political body, over imposing sanctions on the murderous regime of Gen. Sani Abacha. Apparently, Illinois Senator Carol Moseley-Braun is leading the opposition to any such sanctions against the Nigerian government, despite the demands of democratic forces in Nigeria fighting the military regime.

In a weak attempt to provide political cover for Nigeria's military fascists and its imperialist bank-roller Shell Oil, Sen. Moseley-Braun, other members of the CBC, and Louis Farrakhan have resorted to the "constructive engagement" argument that Ronald Reagan and George Bush used not so long ago to support apartheid South Africa, and which the Free South Africa Movement so vociferously attacked.

Death of Michael Taylor, revolutionary journalist

We mourn the death of Michael Taylor, Black American revolutionary and radio journalist who was killed in April in Los Angeles. Michael's life and works are a testimony to the new revolutionary consciousness that emerged after the 1992 L.A. Rebellion. His gruesome murder—while setting up a pirate radio station in South-Central L.A.—is also a manifestation of the disorientation that has set in since then.

For three years Michael's programs gave voice to the lowest and deepest layers of society. Countless men, women and youth were heard on his programs challenging unemployment and cutbacks in social services, homelessness and racism, prisons and police brutality. A turning point came last year when Michael returned with boundless energy from Philadelphia, where he reported on efforts to stop Mumia Abu-Jamal's execution sentence.

He spoke at every opportunity, pushed and prodded everyone not to acquiesce. Michael would often say he was a revolutionary, a freedom fighter: "fighting for my own freedom, as well as for my brothers and sisters." With such a spirit he broke down many barriers of class, race and nationality. Michael Taylor will be sorely missed by all those who knew him.

—Cyrus Noveen

So, at what moment are the Black bourgeoisie's material roots in capital accumulation exposed? At times when the despotic rule of capitalism is being challenged by the self-determination of the masses fighting for freedom from under it, and by the self-determination of the ideas of freedom that give the movement its direction. While the journalists of the CABJ may not deal in ideas but only with the small coin of concrete facts, Ken Saro-Wiwa's closing statement to the military appointed tribunal that sentenced him to death may give them an idea of what Black people here and in Africa are struggling for and are prepared to die for:

We all stand before history. I am a man of peace, of ideas. Appalled by the denigrating poverty of my people who live on a richly endowed land, distressed by their political marginalization and economic strangulation, angered by the devastation of their land, anxious to preserve their right to life and to decent living, and determined to usher into this country as a whole a fair and just democratic system which protects everyone and every ethnic group and gives us all a valid claim to human civilization, I have devoted my intellectual and material resources, my very life, to a cause in which I have total belief and from which I cannot be blackmailed or intimidated....

I repeat that we all stand before history. I and my colleagues are not the only ones on trial. Shell is here on trial... The Company has, indeed, ducked this particular trial, but its day will surely come...for there is no doubt in my mind that the ecological war that the Company has waged in the Delta will be called to question sooner than later and the crimes of that war [will] be duly punished....

On trial also is the Nigerian nation, its present rulers and those who assist them... I am not one of those who shy away from protesting injustice and oppression, arguing that they are expected in a military regime. The military do not act alone. They are supported by a gaggle of politicians, lawyers, judges, academics and businessmen, all of them hiding under the claim that they are only doing their duty, men and women too afraid to wash their pants of urine.

So too does America's Black elite stand accused.

Western Europe: Spring 1996 labor battles, intellectual ferment

(continued from page 1)

would "get nowhere." This was not only rhetoric. In response to the public sector workers' demands for a modest 4.5% increase, Kohl offered the following package: a raise of 0.0%, longer hours, and reductions in benefits.

By May 20, the warning strikes involved over 100,000 workers. In a reminder to capital which was also a dramatic gesture of international solidarity, workers frequently placed small French flags on their union banners, a reference to last winter's strikes.

On May 23, a final series of negotiations broke down, and the warning strikes were put on hold legally until mid-June, after which many expect an even bigger upsurge from labor. Despite the legal ban, however, thousands of workers spontaneously decided to continue their warning strikes for one more day, on the eve of the three-day Pentecost holiday weekend.

Of the world's largest capitalist economies, Germany has by far the strongest unions. So far, German workers have been able to maintain higher levels of social benefits and job security than elsewhere, including their having won the 35-hour week in many industries during the 1990s. But today they face their biggest challenge since World War II, as capital and the state are now determined to exact drastic concessions. As to the allegedly "overpaid" German worker, it should be noted that, as we go to press, the nationwide construction employers group spurned a proposal from unions to set the minimum pay scale at \$12 per hour even though it allowed a lower wage in the former East Germany.

OTHER CONTRADICTIONS IN GERMANY

On top of its labor struggles, other contradictions also tear at German society. First, though students at Humboldt University in Berlin demonstrated this spring against cuts in education funding and scholarship aid. Second, battles continue over immigration, even as draconian effect-immigrant and anti-asylum laws have come into effect. Third, the anti-nuclear movement, largely dormant in the 1990s, suddenly reappeared in May, as tens of thousands demonstrated against a nuclear waste storage plan which was being implemented on the tenth anniversary of Chernobyl. Fourth, a new debate was launched in May by Social Democrats and Greens, who are calling for the revocation of 50,000 death sentences handed out by the Nazis to deserters from the army during 1939-45. Even today, 300 of those who managed to survive the war and who are still alive carry the stigma of a criminal record! For its part, the Kohl government refuses to revoke these convictions from Nazi courts, claiming that to do so would insult the overall reputation

of the army.

Ever since December, labor and the government have continued to wait and watch each others' moves. When Prime Minister Alain Juppe, the man booed over and over again in December for his proposals for wage and benefits cuts, referred in Parliament to the jobs he planned to cut as "bad fat," there was a storm of protest from labor, especially the powerful teachers' union.

Then, on May 23, over 10,000 demonstrated in Paris and other cities for a shorter work week. While labor claims this could cut the country's nearly 12% unem-



Kurdish youths in Berlin celebrate Kurdish new year in the face of government crackdown on immigrants in Germany.

ployment rate, the conservative government will have nothing to do with such proposals. It should also be noted that these May demonstrations, which also involved some disruptions of railway service in the Paris area, were nothing approaching the levels of last winter.

At the same time, anti-immigrant moves by the government are continuing, and, in one dramatic case were actually supported by Cardinal Lustiger of the Catholic Church. After a group of French monks in Algeria were killed by fundamentalists, Lustiger fanned the flames of racism further against France's heavily Muslim immigrant population when he appeared to hold Islam as a whole responsible. This touched off new protests by anti-racist activists.

Within labor itself, a new union federation, Unified and Democratic Solidarity (SUD), has been growing dramatically since the 1995 strikes. SUD takes a strong anti-racist and pro-feminist stance, and its leadership includes a number of people who have been involved in anarcho-syndicalism or Trotskyism.

NEW DISCUSSIONS OF MARXISM

While grass-roots movements continue to emerge, what has remained missing has been a philosophical vision which points beyond the limits of the given state of affairs. Since the 1980s, much of the Left has joined the Right in embracing the fetish of hi-tech, and has celebrated bourgeois democracy and the "free market," all the while moving away not so much from established Communism, but also from Marx, Hegel, and the whole tradition of revolutionary dialectical thought.

In the last three years or so this has begun to change, especially in France. Jacques Derrida published his *Specifiers of Marx* in 1993, and Gilles Deleuze, who died in 1995, had announced that his "next book" would be on Marx. Last September's international Marx conference in Paris drew hundreds more than expected. Surely it is no coincidence that when the mass labor upheavals developed two months later, many leading French intellectuals were once again willing to march alongside labor in challenging the status quo. Still, there was fierce resistance from other intellectuals such as former *Socialisme ou Barbarie* editor Claude Lefort, who opposed the strikes, saying they were out of touch with the new reality of a modern capitalism.

In Germany and the Netherlands too, important debates over Marx and Marxism have taken place. German and Dutch intellectuals have secured continued funding for the *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe* (MEGA)—Marx's Collected Works. This project of publishing all of Marx's and Engels' writings, including notebooks such as the *Ethnological Notebooks*, was first conceived in the Soviet Union in the early 1920s, and out of the first MEGA came the first-ever publication of the epochal 1844 *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*. The first MEGA ground to a halt in the 1930s after Stalin had its editor, David Riazanov, arrested and then executed. Begun again in 1975 with an exclusively Stalinist editorial board in Russia and East Germany, the second MEGA published several dozen volumes until it too was disrupted, this time by the fall of Communism.

Today, a new, more independent group of editors in Amsterdam, Berlin, and Moscow has continued the project, and some new volumes are soon to appear. One change since the fall of Communism is that they have moved away from the notion followed by post-Marx Marxists of a near-identity between Marx and Engels.

In Berlin, at the annual "Volks-Uni" (Peoples' University) held each spring, there was an informative public discussion by a MEGA researcher, Rolf Hecker, on the tragic history of this edition in the 1920s and 1930s. Hecker discussed how in the 1920s, Communists and Social Democrats, with the early Frankfurt School as the mediator, cooperated for a period in publishing Marx.

This years Volks-Uni, while smaller than in earlier years, still drew over 1000 people to hear a wide variety of presentations including ones on Chiapas, on fighting racism and sexism, and on labor. A particularly moving presentation was given by Liliane El-Hachemi, an activist who was forced recently to flee Algeria after being placed on the "death list" of the Islamic fundamentalists. While graphically and movingly showing the resistance of Algerian women to what she termed an out-and-out fascist movement, she also critiqued the severe limitations of both the government and the Left on women's issues in the post-independence period. She emphasized the retrogressive 1981 family law, which represented a major step back for women even before the rise of fundamentalism in Algeria.

The Volks-Uni, founded by Wolfgang Fritz Haug, Frigga Haug and others in the aftermath of the 1960s, continues to have a close relationship to *Das Argument*, the Marxist journal they also founded. In 1996 or 1997, Argument Verlag is planning to publish a German edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, the first new translation of Dunayevskaya's writings to appear in Europe since 1981. That book will surely add an important new dimension to the current debates over Marxism. Clearly, though we live in retrogressive, reactionary times, many workers and intellectuals are searching for an alternative.

Rage over clearcutting

A battle is raging in the forests of the Northwest. The month of May was replete with protests and occupations against the furious pace of clearcutting on public lands that was set in motion by Congress and President Clinton last summer.

The seeds of protest were planted by the "salvage logging rider" passed by Congress and signed by Clinton last year. It allows the Forest Service to give over national forests to logging while suspending all environmental laws and the public's right to challenge it in court. Attached to a larger bill, the rider has been little reported—as has the clearcutting it gave the green light to.

While the rider's rationale is a "forest health crisis," scientists' testimony backs up the Native Forest Network's claim that Congress's concern is "just the latest excuse to log our native forests," and the real crisis in the forests is one of "excessive logging and roadbuilding, overgrazing, mining and subdivisions."

Vice President Gore has promised to stop bad logging sales, but the administration doesn't use the legal powers it has, even when sales are flagrantly illegal. Many of the sales were previously suspended or withdrawn because they threatened critical habitat.

Since Clinton signed the bill last July, there have been dozens of protests in many states, in which over 1,000 people have been arrested, mostly for "trespassing" in public forests. Police have singled out Native American "trespassers" for especially harsh treatment, harassment and racist epithets.

The protests, in which high school and college students are prominent and small local groups play a key role, mushroomed as clearcuts felled old-growth forests from the Olympic National Forest to Mt. Hood. Ancient Forest Week, April 14-21, with over 50 events nationally, peaked at Enola Hill, Oregon, where a Peace Camp was set up to protect this mountain held sacred by some Native Americans. On April 21, 700-1,200 people rallied there, with both Native American and environmentalist speakers.

More actions followed, including a week of protest May 6-11 on Enola Hill and Salvage Hoax Action Week May 10-17 in Montana and Washington. Most actions have been out in the forests, including occupations like the Peace Camp at Warner Creek and the Cultural and Ceremonial Camp on Mt. Hood in Oregon.

Protests have especially dogged the steps of House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who gets financial help from the same Pacific Northwest timber companies that Congress gave \$100 million to subsidize clearcutting the taiga forests of Siberia. These rallies have led to the beginnings of informal labor/environmental and rural/urban alliances.

The rage over clearcutting of public forests has reinvigorated traditional environmentalism: the Sierra Club's members voted 2-1 for its most militant position in years, the Zero Cut initiative aimed at totally ending commercial logging in federal forests. Two years ago, Zero Cut was voted down. The Zero Cut Movement intends to follow up with a Zero Cow/Zero Mine/Zero Drill initiative for public lands.

While Zero Cut is seen as a repudiation of compromise and defensiveness, Patrick Mazza reports in "Cascadia Planet," an Internet magazine (www.tnews.com), that it is a movement "born of a vision" of "reconstitut[ing] public lands." It remains to be seen whether the new upsurge will go from opposing corporate exploitation of public lands to opposing the capitalist system that drives boundless ecological destruction, and develop a vision of new human relations that would allow a totally new relationship to nature as well.

—Franklin Dmitryev

German labor restive

Prague, Czech Republic—After the failure of the trade union proposals of an "alliance for labor" that should have allied government, unions and employers in a common effort for creating more jobs, the government of the Federal Republic of Germany went over to a counterattack. Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government decided it has to save about 50 billion deutsch marks from its budget in order to find a balance as it is threatened by a deficit of 27.6 billion this year and 66.5 billion by 1997. The social expenditures (pensions, health, etc.) are endangered most.

This process is being repeated in other West European countries which must balance their budgets by 1998 if they want to participate in the creation of a unified European currency on Jan. 1, 1999.

However, the trade unions seem to be more rebellious this time than the chancellor may have believed. Among the first who radically opposed the government maneuvers is the union of state employees, OeTV. In Bavaria alone there were in mid-May work stoppages of employees in 30 institutions in 12 different cities. Its spokesman said: "We want to avoid a severe impact on the public, yet at the same time we wish to show how determined we are to follow with bigger actions."

The two public employees unions OeTV and DAG asked for a 4.5% rise of salaries for 1996, which has been refused so far. Since they have altogether 3.2 million members their strikes could be a strong blow to the economy. Ready to strike are also the service workers of the HBV union. Their chairwoman Margret Monig-Raan promised an opposition to the government until the next elections in 1998 "and beyond." Kohl, she said, "cannot be allowed to abolish the welfare state." Other unions—all members of the DGB trade union association—prepared a scheme of warning strikes for the week of May 20-25. As the chancellor repeatedly refused to change his austerity plans, Germany seems to be on the eve of a country-wide strike wave.

—Stephen Steiger

Opposing the capitalist system that drives boundless ecological destruction, and developing a vision of new human relations that would allow a totally new relationship to nature as well.

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Editorial

The mighty \$5.15 minimum wage moved a step closer to reality when the U.S. House of Representatives approved it on May 23. Yet this accomplishment by Bill Clinton and the Congressional Democrats can only be viewed as a cynical attempt to take up space barely to the left of the Republican Party in an election year.

Clinton's State of the Union address in January promised to raise the wages of the lowest-paid workers. Yet his supposed commitment to improving workers' lives doesn't square with administration moves to corporatize health care, imprison youth, and press-gang welfare mothers into low-wage jobs.

The Republican Party of "citizen" Robert Dole and Rep. Dick Armey for its part has belatedly acceded to Clinton on this issue only to cut its political losses. Armey, a Neanderthal advocate of abolishing minimum wage laws, led his party in pandering to petty capitalists with his attempt to load the minimum wage bill with amendments to exempt small businesses, establish a probationary period, and to set-up a two-tier structure. Each would give employers a way to avoid paying even a puny \$5.15 an hour to their workers.

A LAUGHABLE MINIMUM

So low is the \$5.15 hourly wage that it represents no gain for minimum wage workers. On the contrary, as much as real income has fallen for blue collar families workers—real wages have fallen 20% since 1979—the real minimum wage has slipped even further.

For the two fifths of minimum wage earners for whom it's their only income, for the one tenth who are the sole

Clinton, Dole minimum wage scam

wage earners of their family, for the one third who are youth, for the one half who are women, and for all the 12 million who stand to get a raise if \$5.15 an hour becomes law—90¢ more an hour will not make up for lost ground and can do little to change their lives.

"I'm really doing a big favor for a big corporation for very little money," dryly explained one retail service worker who cannot get by with \$5.50 an hour, above both the current and the proposed federal minimums. He's not the only worker unhappy doing such favors for capitalists.

Many laborers do not earn even the legal minimum wage: undocumented workers driven further underground by new immigration laws; domestic home-workers, especially apparel makers, who toil in 3.4 million homes across the U.S., sweatshop employees, again many immigrant.

For those working in the regulated economy, a good example is the single mother, recently in the news, who was earning a full-time wage of \$4.25 an hour in Chicago as a home care worker for the elderly. Even with another paycheck from cleaning homes and her son's Social Security benefits, good fortune to her means bringing home \$12,000 a year. Food stamps and chores which reduce her rent don't add much. Earning \$90 more a week would knock down some bills, but not much.

What's a more realistic income? Using the actual expenses of a working family of three, Kathleen Shankman at Northern Illinois University calculated that a real livable income would be \$27,415 a year, or \$13.71 an hour.

KNOWING WHAT'S UNACCEPTABLE

Frustration is growing where the system exploits workers more and more. "Each time I lost a job, I had to start at the bottom and work my way up," the home care worker/house cleaner complained. "And when I get just enough room where I can breathe, that job is phased out and I have to start over again."

The desire to overcome such subjugation most often appears in attempts to get organized. Statistically, union wages are \$150 a week higher than non-union, a fact capitalists and politicians are well aware of. This, along with the need to control working conditions, shows why most workers want an effective union where they work.

Yet, just as Patrick Buchanan and Bill Clinton pretend to pay homage to the frustrations of the working poor, the AFL-CIO's drive for a livable wage rings hollow too. For instead of seeing new resources poured into local union drives, the union rank and file is getting the \$35 million "America Needs A Raise" campaign from the AFL-CIO. It barely conceals its purpose of supporting Democratic candidates, and the proposed drive to "organize the unorganized" is nearly forgotten.

A Chicago meatpacking worker brought home this frustration with the economy and the union bureaucracy: "The minimum raise as Congress is talking about it is not going to do any good. Anyone earning that will have to do a whole lot of overtime to make it. We bring home \$200 to \$300 in a paycheck. People go home saying 'this is a light check.' We get raises, but not cost of living raises. That went out the window in the Local 100 contract some time ago."

SELF-DETERMINATION

The wide gulf between a livable wage and the minimum wage, whatever its official level, only reflects the prime issue in the wage debate: the determination by workers to control their own lives. State and local movements, like that pushing for the Chicago Jobs and Living Wage Ordinance have taken on a life of their own, especially when joined by the homeless.

The Justice For Janitors project has brought new Latino immigrants into the Service Employees union, some 5,000 in Silicon Valley. Their campaign to win an industry-wide union contract erupted in Palo Alto recently where they sat in front of City Hall. Often the militancy of new, often immigrant union members embarrasses

do-nothing union bureaucrats.

In the low-wage bastion of the South USA, the vision of organizing the unorganized remains a legacy of the 1960s freedom struggles. Black women at Delta Pride catfish bargained, after a bitter strike in 1990, for a contract and livable wages not seen in the Mississippi Delta up to then. "A union contract helped us pass the minimum wage," explains one of the women.

But she adds, "What we're earning is just like the minimum wage. In Delta Pride, the money you're making will qualify you for [welfare] and food stamps. And a lot of workers are pulling two jobs." To overcome that kind of life, she sees no separation between organizing the rest of the industry and raising wages in her plant.

Recent news about "economic insecurity" shows that more and more workers think the system is broken and can't be fixed. Their struggles breathe life into the minimum wage debate, well beyond the limits of the politicians.

View from the West Bank

I grew up as a Palestinian on the West Bank under Jordanian rule. During my childhood, hatred towards the Jews was a natural ingredient of daily life. They did not seem to be real people. In fact, until the war of 1967 and the occupation I never saw a Jew with my own eyes.

For me, the big change came in 1972, when I started working in Tel-Aviv and got to know individual Israelis. I learned Hebrew quite easily and kept my eyes and ears open. During the war of October 1973 [when the Israeli Army was caught by surprise and suffered heavily], it was not easy to be an Arab in Tel-Aviv. I felt the hostility from the Jews around me. However, towards the end of that war I noticed that something was changing among them, too: they were starting to view Arabs in a new way.

In 1977 the late President Sadat of Egypt took his historic decision to visit Israel. Sadat and Begin made peace, and it held. Already then I felt it as a terrible mistake that we Palestinians did not join in this move. Our leadership was still too caught up in alliances with the radical Arab regimes.

I got to know a lot of ordinary Israelis, also many from the right wing. I often had debates with them, but I think I succeeded in getting through the message that we have our national identity, that there will be no peace until there are two states for the two peoples.

This was at the time of the Lebanon War. The government wanted to destroy our leadership and crush our people. But I think the result was to prove to the people in Israel that it is not so easy to destroy the Palestinian identity. I was myself in the giant 1982 anti-war rally in Tel-Aviv, and when I looked around me, at so many Israelis demonstrating, I felt that at last the change had started.

The moment of the hand shake between Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat aroused so many hopes on both sides, among people who had gone through the war, the occupation, the mutual terrorism! But after just a few months, the enemies of peace started acts of violence in order to sabotage this great process. First the Israeli extremists, whose attacks culminated in the Baruch Goldstein slaughter, then the Palestinian extremists of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Nevertheless, the Palestinian Authority became a reality.

Meanwhile the Israeli extremists had Rabin murdered, and Hamas started its series of attacks. I saw on TV the place where the bomb exploded in Tel-Aviv. It is very near to the cinema where I worked for 15 years, until the closure. I knew every street corner when I saw it on television. I also know very well how Israelis feel when such terrible things happen.

At the same time, however, we suffered our own ordeal. The Israeli army imprisoned us in our village. During one night the army made a raid and arrested two people in our neighborhood. We had hoped such things would never happen again but, Dura is in the "B" area where Israel still has the right to arrest people, according to Oslo-2. So, during a whole week, I sat every night on my roof and watched out for the soldiers.

The big problem left is the closure. It is more tight than ever. Most of the people here are sitting at home, without work, without income: there are just no jobs for them.

The punishment if you are caught illegally in Israel has also become much more severe; even your employer can go to prison if they catch you at his place. The economic hardship of every household is not easy to describe. If only we could import flour from Jordan; everything costs here ten times more than in other Arab countries. When we have to pay in the shop we are part of the Israeli economy but when we want to work in Israel we are not.

If the Hamas thought that in such a desperate situation they will become more popular, then they made a big miscalculation. Most of the people I know, blame Hamas for the situation more than they blame Israel. We must hold on to the peace process, and not let go. I think that the enemies of peace are no more than 10% on the Israeli side and the same on the Palestinian side. We must not let this minority succeed. We must cooperate, there should be reconciliation and cultural exchange—not just political treaties. It's time to introduce to each other the beautiful aspects of our peoples. The ugly sides have already been shown far too much.

—Naif Alarjib

Naif Alarjib is an unemployed Palestinian worker whose views on Middle East peace were written March 15 from Dura on the West Bank and originally published in *The Other Israel*.

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'Beyond Capital': envisioning a new society

(continued from page 5)

Meszaros' view of Stalinism. He correctly insists that there was nothing socialist about the USSR, since it maintained the exploitative domination of labor by capital. However, he argues that because the "free market" and the old capitalist class were eliminated, it was not state-capitalist. He refers to the USSR as a "postcapitalist capital-producing society."

This definitely colors his entire analysis, for he is thereby introducing a significant time lag between the abolition of capitalism and the abolition of capital. No such time lag, however, was envisioned by Marx. For Marx the abolition of the capitalist by no means implies the abolition of capitalism. That can only occur with the abolition of capital as a universalizing social form. For this reason, in Vol. I of *Capital* Marx said not even the concentration of all capital in the hands of one entity would fundamentally change capitalist production; and in Vol. III he spoke of "capitalist communism."

By skipping over the theory of state-capitalism, Meszaros places all his emphasis on "transition" to the detriment of the critical issue for today—what Marxist-Humanists call the need for "a totally new revolt in which everyone experiences 'absolute liberation.'"

Marxist-Humanism's development of this concept flowed from a creative return to Hegel's concept of absolute negativity. Meszaros, in contrast, explicitly rejects the dialectic of negativity in favor of a "firmer material footing." Herein lies the crux of his limitations. By rejecting Hegel's concept of absolute negativity and skipping over Marx's last decade, Meszaros saws off the

branch he is sitting on, in that he is left with too narrow a philosophic base from which to work out the problem of "what happens after" which so concerns him.

The logic of an idea does take its toll on theory and theoreticians.

* * * * *

Meszaros has nevertheless provided us with an invaluable study. He is quite right to imply that the reason we are facing such an unprecedented political retrogression is that revolutionists have not provided ground for answering the question "what happens after the revolution." And he is quite right that we need to overcome the limitations of post-Marx Marxists which explain this defect.

Yet what is needed in order to achieve this is not so much "a firmer material footing," as much as a firmer philosophic one, as found in the unique contributions of Marxist-Humanism. To achieve this, however, requires penetrating the dialectics of philosophy as an organizational endeavor—a task that remains to be done.

**See "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" of May 12 and 20, 1953, in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1989), in which Dunayevskaya quotes Hegel: "The pure Idea, in which the determinateness or reality of the Notion is itself raised to the level of Notion, is an absolute liberation, having no further immediate determination which is not equally posited and equally Notion. Consequently there is no transition in this freedom....The transition here therefore must rather be taken to mean that the Idea freely releases itself in absolute self-security and self-repose." (p. 37)

Youth

The maturity of our age

by Maya Jhansi

If you think for a moment that capitalism has a more benevolent face these days, you're wrong. Picture a nine-year-old child in an overcrowded, dusty garment factory—working continuously from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., except for the days when she works the night shift until 3 a.m. Do you think this is an outmoded practice from the nineteenth century? It is not. It is a common practice, around the world and yes, including right here in the good old U.S.

We know that the so-called "globalization" of capitalism and the rise of hi-tech means that brutal forms of sweated labor are a thing of the past. In fact, child labor is on the rise. The United Nations' International Labor Organization estimates that there are close to 200 million child laborers in the world today, and this excludes the growing number of children sold into prostitution or forced to beg and do odd jobs to help support themselves and their families.

While child labor is nothing new, what does seem to be new today is the growing consciousness and struggle of children and youth against it. Last April, the brutal murder of an outspoken 12-year-old labor activist from Pakistan, Iqbal Masih, brought the struggles of children in Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh to world-wide attention. Sold into slavery at the age of four, Iqbal became a leading voice in the struggle against child labor by the time he was ten years old.

FROM SOUTH ASIA TO THE U.S.

In South Asia alone, there are over 60 million child workers. In the carpet industry, one of the region's largest export industries, children are cramped together at looms for 14 hours a day, weaving exotic rugs to be sold to the West. Often these children are kidnapped or bought by the carpet factories from desperate parents.

Overall, children in the Third World work in hazardous industries, exposed to toxic fumes and dangerous equipment. Many children suffer from work-related physical ailments such as tuberculosis, stunted growth, and other health problems. A Pakistani landowner expressed the inhuman disregard for children best: "Children are cheaper to run than tractors and smarter than oxen."

Defenders of child labor in the Third World argue that it is imposing Western standards and morals to demand

'Land and Freedom'

"Land and Freedom," a recently released film directed by Ken Loach, an independent Marxist filmmaker from Britain, chronicles the experience of a British volunteer's participation in the failed 1936 Spanish Revolution. What is exciting about the film is that it transcends being a mere history lesson of the Stalinist betrayal of the mass freedom struggle against Francisco Franco's fascist coup.

The film speaks directly to today by giving a vivid warning of the almost inevitable emergence of counter-revolution from within the revolution when the ideals of those fighting for genuine liberation are not worked out.

Loach poignantly stresses this inter-communication between generations by allowing the story to unfold soon after a contemporary youth finds her grandfather suffering from a fatal heart attack in his Liverpool housing project. After his death, the granddaughter digs through an old box and reads her grandfather's moving letters of how he joined and fought in the Spanish Revolution.

By briefly showing the anarchist symbol and fascist National Front graffiti scrawled on the walls of the housing project, Loach hints that all the contradictions that arose before World War II are still with us today.

The film flashes back to David, the grandfather, as a young unemployed worker and a member of the Communist Party who is determined to go to Spain to stop the spread of fascism. Once in Spain he is placed in an English-speaking international militia of women and men that is led by the POUM, a socialist group in the Spanish Popular Front.

At first he is disappointed not to be able to work directly with the Communists, which he views as the truly revolutionary party. And yet as his involvement deepens, and his militia liberates a town from fascist domination, he witnesses how the landless peasants are determined to collectivize the land immediately to take the revolution further than the Popular Front Government wants.

Even within his militia, tensions grow and factions form over the meaning of freedom and how to attain it. It is the American pragmatist character who foreshadows the final disastrous betrayal. This pragmatism is what pulled on the thinking of genuine revolutionaries and even pulled anarchists into working with a so-called alliance with the Stalinist state power.

The weapons supplied by Russia, which the Popular Front had to pay for in gold, came at an even heavier price: under the guise of creating a "professional army," Stalin was able to crush the revolution from within. The film depicts the counter-revolutionary nature of the Stalinist power grab very concretely in its early stages. The first freedom fighters to be disarmed are the women. The anti-feminism of the bureaucrats is exposed when the women, who are shown to be the most idealistic, militant and self-disciplined fighters, are demoted to nurses and cooks in the name of "professionalism."

This film comes at just the right time and reminds us of the importance of a generation of comrades who were the first, if perhaps a little too late to save revolutionary Spain, to fully recognize the state-capitalist counter-revolutionary nature of Stalin's Russia.

—Jim Guthrie

an end to child labor—a convenient argument for the capitalist. A very considerate spokesman for Disney Consumer Products, which exploits children all over Asia, was recently quoted as saying; "You can't completely impose Western perceptions on these nations. That shows a lack of respect."

But, what's worse is that the attitude that child labor is some inhuman practice indigenous to the Third World is shared by even those humanitarians fighting against it, activists who separate child labor abroad from the growing problem of child labor in the West.

Far from child labor being a phenomenon of the so-called "backward" Third World, it is endemic to the West and to the influence of Western capitalism around the world. In India, for example, child labor in the carpet industry has tripled since the 1980s with its growth as an export-oriented industry. As Kailash Satyarthi, head of the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude, a coalition of 50 organizations working on child rights, told the Multinational Monitor: "In recent years there has been a tremendous growth in child servitude...There is a very clear correlation between the growth of the industry and the number of child laborers."

Bourgeois economists are noting the rise in child labor violations in the U.S. as well, proving that brutal child labor is not a "stage" that capitalism moves through before it becomes more humane. In 1992, the Labor Department reported 19,443 violations, twice the 1980 level. This is not to mention the flagrant (but supposedly hidden) practices of the U.S. garment industry in employing children starting at age 7 at minuscule, sometimes non-existent, wages; migrant children who work on farms from the age of 3; or children hired to do odd jobs like selling candy door-to-door at substandard wages and in dangerous conditions.

YOUTH IDEALISM WORLDWIDE

Children all over the world are not accepting these inhuman conditions passively, however. In the face of vicious threats of retribution, thousands of children have become outspoken activists for social change. Iqbal Masih's voice was an important one, and his work succeeded in closing down dozens of Pakistani carpet factories.

Iqbal's courage and vision sparked the imagination of another young fellow across the Atlantic, Craig Kielburger, a 13-year-old Canadian who started a group called Free the Children, made up of kids his age. When Craig visited Asia and Iqbal's unmarked grave, he decided that "the only thing that really matters now is to carry on his work."

The world has a lot to learn from these courageous youth. Craig perhaps said it best in a recent interview on "60 Minutes": "I believe that young people when speaking out have a lot of power. One of the best things about being young is that we still have our imagination. We still think we can fly. We still think we can go to the moon."

It is this kind of idealism and not the phony humanitarianism of politicians that this world needs more of. Child labor is a brutal reality organic to this capitalist world. Envisioning a better life, a new kind of society, is an imperative and a responsibility demanded by this growing generation of child activists.

Youth in Revolt

by Kevin Michaels



Seven graduating Barnard College students who showed solidarity with striking clerical employees had their diplomas withheld by the school's administration. The students took part in a sit-in with Barnard's clerical employees; who are striking over the issue of health insurance premiums. Administrators say that the diplomas will not be released until disciplinary proceedings have run their course.

The All Burma Students' Democratic Front has undertaken a boycott of Pepsi products, as part of their activity against the current repressive regime. Pepsi recently completed an agreement with the Burmese government for a joint bottling and marketing deal.

Efforts by the University of North Carolina to privatize its housekeeping services have been stymied by workers and students protesting together. Demonstrations both in Chapel Hill and Raleigh by the U.N.C. Housekeepers Association and the Coalition for Economic Justice, a student group, have forced the Board of Governors to back off from a move to replace its current work force with low-wage contractors.

Youth celebrate gang truce

South Central Los Angeles—The Gang Truce in Watts was celebrated on April 27 at Will Rogers Park at 103rd Street and Central Avenue. The event was a march and rally with a turnout of about 250 to 300 people. The crowd was Black and Latino as well as a few politically active whites. Overall the majority of the participants and speakers at the five hour event were youth.

Many different gang sets were represented on the stage including Bloods, Crips and Latino cholos. The Blackstone Rangers, a Chicago gang with an affiliation in L.A., came out from Chicago to show their respect for the truce.

Some of the Latino gangs present represent an attempt to end a bloody race war raging between Black and Brown such as in Venice, Cal., where many have died, assumed by many to be a drug war. The war has basically been stopped by a truce involving the three main housing projects in Watts, the truce involving Nickerson Gardens, Jordan Downs, Imperial Courts.

As the race war has intensified within the prison system, the rally of April 27 was a glimmer of light in the attempt to end this deadly warfare provoked by the prison guards in their role for the system. In a particularly violent month of February, 145 prisoners were injured during one week at Wayside County Jail during battles between Black and Latino inmates.

I felt that the creative energy that went toward the fourth anniversary of the Gang Truce was important; in a sense many felt "the greatness" of the moment but were not sure where history may be going or taking us. A Black woman at the event spoke in relationship to the overpowering retrogressive reality: "But I don't let reality overpower my thinking, I feel the Mind/Spirit is stronger. What you see going on around you can be changed by thought, you see Bosnia is reality not just for them, but also for us."

One Latino youth spoke from the stage on the importance of the L.A. Gang Truce: "The events that we are participating in today have had world-wide repercussions. The Gang Truce in Watts inspired and impacted a gang truce in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil."

In my neighborhood, a section of Watts (the gang set represented is not directly involved in the Gang Truce), three have been killed within the last month and last week one was shot on my street but lived; so the truce where it exists is history-in-the making for many and cannot be shortchanged. Even though the voice from the streets may not hold all the answers like a total philosophy of freedom, a growth in thought must take place among the masses in order to reach Freedom.

—Gene Ford

Haitian odysseys

Edwidge Danticat, *Krik? Krak!* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996).

Imagine you are a young man, a political refugee, escaping Port-au-Prince and the brutal military regime there. You are in a small, leaky boat on the vast Atlantic Ocean. Lost and hungry, you and 36 others drift helplessly in choppy seas. Haiti is a memory and Miami is only a mirage. You may never see your loved ones again; you may never see land again!

That is the opening scene from "Children of the Sea," one of nine short stories by Edwidge Danticat, a young Haitian-American woman writer. The stories are from her new work of fiction, *Krik? Krak!*

The title, *Krik? Krak!*, Danticat borrows from Haitian storytelling tradition. In Haiti when a storyteller asks "Krik?" the listeners answer "Krak!" This call and response ritual begins a story.

But the vibrant heritage of peasant storytelling is not all Danticat brings from Haiti. She also draws from the rich legacy of peasant and working-class struggles for freedom. The Haitian people's historic struggles for dignity serve as a quilt. And each tale is a pattern sewn on top with the threads of her characters' lives. From Boukman to Lavalas, she interweaves history and the dialectic of struggle.

We can see this in "Children of the Sea." By reading the letters of two young lovers—the man at sea and the woman still in Port-au-Prince—the layers of their lives and their love for each other are poetically peeled away. Yet, their story also reveals the tragic demise of the Lavalas movement and the barbaric retribution of the counter-revolution. From this, we see, we understand, the circumstances that drove so many Haitians to become "boat people."

Or take "Nineteen Thirty-Seven." It is the story of a mother and her daughter. The mother, falsely put in prison for witchcraft, is visited by her daughter, who was born on the same day her grandmother was butchered by Generalissimo Trujillo's soldiers at a river dividing Haiti and "that other country whose name [her] mother can't say." The mother fights quietly to retain her dignity in prison. She also passes on to her daughter a legacy of strength and historical memory. Here, Danticat retells a part of the sad saga of the massacre of thousands of Haitian peasants in the Dominican Republic.

What is so interesting about *Krik? Krak!* though is that Danticat has placed her stories in the social context of "after the revolution has failed." This thread runs through each tale. The characters must deal with the lost revolution in their daily lives. We see its impact on ordinary people and we empathize with them. It makes the overall feelings to her stories sad and lamentable.

But at the same time she shows the strength and courage of Haitian people. They are not just a voiceless Black mass, the "Wretched of the Sea." They are individuals. They are humans who reason.

—Robert Reed

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Three different elections—India, Israel and Russia—have an influence on events reaching beyond each nation's boundaries. In future issues *News & Letters* will analyze these in greater depth; for now, it is important to give a brief summary of all three.

Indian politics in disarray

The parliamentary victory of the rabidly right-wing Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) lasted only 13 days. Winning with barely one-third of the votes cast, the BJP's Prime Minister, A.B. Vajpayee, had to resign when faced with dual opposition from the two other major contenders: the scandal-ridden and totally discredited Congress Party, and the United Front (UF), a coalition of leftist, centrist and regional parties.

After much maneuvering, the UF decided on H.D. Deve Gowda to head a new government. The brief ascendancy of the BJP, and the ultimate rise of the UF, were both predicated on climbing over the rubble of Congress, which had ruled nearly without interruption since India's independence from British colonialism in 1947. The UF was able to head a new government only with support from Congress, with which they have little in common except opposition to a BJP government.

The rapid parliamentary defeat of the BJP is no cause for celebration. More ominous is the party's rapid growth through espousing a retrogressive nationalist and religious fundamentalist ideology. Even without full state power, BJP became infamous for generating an anti-Muslim frenzy among Hindus five years ago, in which thousands were killed. Vajpayee is open about his long time membership in the R.S.S., a neo-fascist secret organization steeped in returning India to a pre-Muslim Hindu "motherland."

The BJP also calls for an openly nuclearly-armed India (this directed mainly towards Pakistan), the curtailment of civil rights and protections for the Muslim minority, increased military repression in Kashmir. In the economic sphere, the BJP demands greater national control over foreign capital investment, protectionism for Indian state-capitalism, and promotion of the pre-colonial economic "self-sufficiency" ethos.

While the Indian economy grew at a vigorous rate after "free market" reforms were introduced by Congress five years ago, the results have exacerbated the hardships of life for the vast majority of Indians, who deserted Congress in droves. Many turned to the parties which now form the United Front, including parties which support the interests and rights of those on the bottom of India's oppressive, patriarchal caste-ridden society.

The multi-party United Front (called the National Front-Left Front during the election campaign) gained support from those who opposed both BJP and Congress. The question now, in the limited breathing space afforded by the defeat of both those parties, is what ideas will speak to the new human forces who want to change India and their own lives.

Israel moves to the Right

The razor thin victory of Benjamin Netanyahu over Shimon Peres says more about the similarities than the

differences between Likud, which exploited the issue of "security" during the campaign, and Labor, which did the same thing in terms of the "peace process" with Palestinians. When the election rhetoric is peeled off, the "peace process" itself and the current status of Palestinians shows how like-minded are Israel's rulers.

Since a series of terrorist attacks within Israel three months ago, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza have lived in a virtual prison "lock down" which lasted for the duration of the election campaign. This amounted to a massive layoff, since many Palestinian workers rely on jobs inside Israel—a layoff administered by the "peace process" Labor government.

The Rabin-Labor government, followed by Peres after Rabin was assassinated by a far right extremist Jew, doled out "autonomy" in miniscule increments. This autonomy has meant little on the practical level for any except Arafat and the Palestinian Authority. Israel has maintained control over the West Bank infrastructure, especially roads and water rights. It has also left intact the rabidly fundamentalist settlers on the West Bank and in the Arab sections of Jerusalem.

The most damning step in the "peace process" occurred during the Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon in April, when an Israeli artillery shell killed over 100 civilians at the Qana refugee area. At least 400,000 new refugees were driven from the area by the Israeli bombardment which was designed to depopulate the region and make northern Israel "secure."

While anti-freedom religious fundamentalists within the Palestinian movement have used the tactic of civilian deaths within Israel to further their agenda, the Palestinian Authority headed by Arafat increasingly has exhibited its authoritarianism in repressing even the mildest internal opposition, and in following the wishes of the Israeli military.

The case of Dr. Eyad Sarraj, a Gaza doctor and psychiatrist who was arrested by Arafat's police, has been chronicled in the *New York Times*. Sarraj was arrested for making critical comments about the Palestinian Authority becoming an organization dedicated to its own security and perpetuation, using surveillance, torture and jailings.

But Sarraj's larger criticism was directed towards the hollowness of the "peace process" itself: "The kind of peace we have now is a total psychological surrender. It is far more damaging to the self than fighting a war." There is no doubt that in relations and dealings with Palestinians, Likud will be different than Labor was. But it is a difference in "degree," not in "kind."

Upcoming vote in Russia

The upcoming June 16 election in Russia has served to bring ominous developments to center stage. Although Boris Yeltsin made a grandstand play to put a cease-fire in place in Chechnya only weeks before the election—first meeting the Chechen leader Yandarbiyev in Moscow, and then flying in secret to a secure military post in Chechnya—the past record of such words and deeds has been worthless.

The March so-called halt to Russian military offensives was followed by some of the worst bombing and shelling in the war, specifically targeting the civilian population in schools, hospitals and mosques. Whether or not Russian military leaders are openly defying Yeltsin, or Yeltsin is simply lying opportunistically with hopes of

winning the election by denying the war still goes on, it is the Chechen people who are being killed—over 35,000 since Russia attacked in 1994.

Yeltsin is also saddled with the scourge of his "free market" reforms which have enriched a small elite and spread ever wider circles of corruption and crime. The



Despite the so-called cease-fire, a Russian soldier detained a Chechen civilian, June 2.

majority of Russians have been thrown out of work, or if still working, have been paid little or nothing. Yeltsin's dependence on foreign capital, especially the IMF, and the backing which the Clinton administration has bestowed, make him a prize target for his main opposition.

Yeltsin is running against a resurrected Communist Party, led by Gennadi Zyuganov, which has forged an alliance with Russian nationalists as reactionary as the Communists. One of the prime builders of this alliance is Aleksandr Prokhanov, an avowed anti-Semitic Russian nationalist reactionary, and advisor to Zyuganov. Zyuganov himself is an unabashed admirer of Stalin, writing that Stalin died too soon: "Stalin needed five to seven more years to make his ideological perestroika irreversible and insure the revival of the groundlessly interrupted spiritual and statist tradition of Russia."

The election is of great concern because of the likelihood that a victory by the Communist-nationalist "Red-Brown" alliance will push Russia back toward its totalitarian past, and return the world to the global frictions characteristic of the Cold War.

Despite his obvious differences with Zyuganov, Yeltsin has moved much closer to his position by advocating continuation of his genocidal war against Chechnya. What underlines this move to a reassertive statism is the profound social instability and malaise being exacerbated by the introduction of "free market" economic reforms. No matter who wins the election, the Russian masses will confront a ruling class determined to strengthen the power of the authoritarian state at their expense.

No surrender in East Timor

Chicago—East Timor's foreign minister in exile, Jose Ramos Horta, visited the campus of Northwestern University on May 9 as part of a nationwide tour organized by the East Timor Action Network. Ramos Horta left his native island three days before its invasion by Indonesia in 1975 and has been active since then in representing the struggle of the East Timorese people for national self-determination to the world at large.

Ramos Horta began by underscoring the brutal nature of the ongoing occupation—only a few days before the talk, five students were killed by Indonesian troops for taking part in a demonstration against bus fare increases. He then went on to discuss the world political climate in which the Indonesian invasion took place, and the "organized international hypocrisy" which has confronted East Timorese aspirations for freedom since.

The proposal put forward by Ramos Horta for an end to the occupation is a fairly modest one comprising three stages. The first is the complete removal of Indonesian troops from the country and the demobilization of the small remaining guerrilla force in the countryside. The second is the stationing of UN specialized agencies to oversee elections for local representative officials. Only after these two stages are completed would the third discussion of the ultimate status of the territory, then take place.

Indonesia remains intransigent, but the resistance which "followed the people out of the mountains" after army resettlement campaigns, has taken on new, mass forms of nonviolent self-activity. "Our people will never surrender," Ramos Horta said.

The Saturday after the talk at Northwestern, Ramos Horta traveled to Charleston, Ill. with East Timor Action Network activists to speak at a press conference publicizing the lockout of workers going on at the Trailmobile plant there. Trailmobile is owned by the Gemala Group, a conglomerate with close ties to the Indonesian military.

—Kevin Michael

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding in 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958), *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as American Civilization on Trial concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

Coming in July N&L...

Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1996-1997

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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25¢

Immigrants strengthen U.S. Labor



by John Marcotte

I have friends, and fellow workers, who are so-called "illegals." I call them fellow workers not because we work the same job—we don't; I make four times what they earn. But we both have no way to live except to go out each day and sell our ability to labor. However, I can sell my labor power right here, close to home. My friends are from a beautiful countryside in South America, and no capitalist invests there in any production. What do you do when there is no "means of production?"

They tell me of earlier times, when there were hand-made manufactures: first straw hats, later fine shoes, finally wool sweaters. Each of these manufactures was replaced by a flood of cheap, machine-made imports. Nike may employ workers in Vietnam for 14 cents an hour; Kathy Lee Gifford, in Honduras for 28 cents; Disney in Haiti, and Toys-R-Us in Thailand.

In large parts of Latin America, workers don't even have the "privilege" of being worked to death for less than they need to support their families. There is simply no production, no investment. If the land is productive, families often seize land from the idle rich, to organize production themselves. This leads to bloody battles and repression from the land owners and the state. Where my friends are from, there is not enough rainfall for subsistence farming.

In their home province, the only jobs are provided by

(continued on page 3)

Black World

Absolute negativity & Black liberation



by Lou Turner

The word 'Revolution'—people use it all the time. But do they really understand it? 'Capitalism.' 'Dialectics.' All these words. Maybe footnotes about what these words mean would help, just a little footnote. Then when the average person reads it they can put it into perspective. That would help a lot. Here's another one: 'Absolute Negativity'...

—S.C., a Black woman worker

Dear S.C.:

In the 1973 Introduction to *Philosophy and Revolution*, Raya began by saying that the Black dimension is so deeply rooted in absolute negativity, "in the desire for new beginnings through the syllogistic resolution of alienation," that the discovery of the dialectic of liberation by Soledad Brother George Jackson in that hell-hole San Quentin Prison was not accidental. Nor is it accidental that the truth of each of the words you asked about—Revolution, Dialectics, and Capitalism—is found in the philosophic concept, Absolute Negativity.

But let's begin at the beginning. And that means that in order to understand the dialectic and its most important concept, absolute negativity, you must begin with your own experience, not as a practical matter but as a generalization, a summation, of what it has all meant. In a certain sense, what Hegel is asking when he begins to explain what he means by absolute negativity at the end of his most difficult and comprehensive work of philosophy, the *Science of Logic*, is: why, when at the very moment we have finally reached the point where what we conceptualized or theorized about reality has become a practical concern of the man and woman on the street and the worker on the job—why should the biggest contradictions between our notion of freedom and reality crop up?

Back in the 1960s, when Dr. King was leading the Civil Rights Movement which changed the face of the South, and trying unsuccessfully to bring the movement up North, everyone was sure that notions like "democracy," "civil rights," and "freedom" itself would finally be made real. Remember at the time, Eddie Harris' song about making it real, "compared to what"? Freedom was made real, compared to the plantation politics that the movement was trying to uproot. And a new generation of Black political leaders were saying that it had to be made real, compared to the plantation politics that denied Black folks elected representation.

(Continued on page 10)

Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1996-97

Today's crises and the search for a total uprooting



Students at UC-Berkeley in one of many protests against California's anti-affirmative action initiative.

I. State-capitalism in global disarray

News and Letters Committees publishes the Draft of its Perspectives Thesis each year directly in the pages of N&L. We urge your participation in our discussion around this thesis because our age is in such total crisis that no revolutionary organization can allow any separation between theory and practice, workers and intellectuals, "inside" and "outside," philosophy and organization. We are raising questions and ask you to help in working out the answers.

Two seemingly different presidential election campaigns, one in Russia and the other in the U.S., reveal much about the nature of the present historic moment. What allows us to view them as a unit is the persistence of state-capitalism as a global phenomenon.

State-capitalism as a world stage of production first emerged in the period of the Great Depression, assuming such diverse forms as the single-party state in Russia and the New Deal welfare reforms in the U.S. Though the dramatic changes of the past two decades have undermined much of their foundations, today's realities disclose that state-capitalism remains with us.¹

A. Russia's resurgent statism

Nowhere is the persistence of state-capitalism more evident than in Russia. The recent elections there show that far from "democracy" being revived by Boris Yeltsin's victory, he is instead riding toward a second term on a tidal wave of statism.

In one sense there is nothing new in this. Yeltsin served as a Communist Party apparatchnik for decades, breaking from it when the Russian economy began to come apart in the 1980s. He then adopted the rhetoric of "free market reform" without fundamentally changing his elitist and anti-democratic approach.

Since those reforms were introduced in 1991, Russia's economic meltdown has accelerated. Industrial production is less than half the level of 1990. Some 90 million live in extreme poverty. Over 70% of its food and 60% of

its consumer goods are imported from overseas. So deep is the country's economic, political and spiritual collapse that average life expectancy for men has fallen from 64 to just 57 in the past six years.

Resistance to this was recently voiced by the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East: "For us the transition to a market economy is characterized by a total breakdown of traditional economic activities and ways of life, an uncontrolled growth, of unemployment and impoverishment, life-threatening levels of crime and alcoholism, sharp decline in the health of our peoples and death rates that are one-and-a-half times the average in the country."

These conditions have provided the soil from which the Communists have reemerged as a major political force. The Communist Party may have seemed finished in 1991, when it was banned following the collapse of the "Soviet" Union. But it has since been resurrected under the leadership of Gennadi Zyuganov, who has utilized an old Stalinist bedfellow—Great Russian chauvinism—along with support for the Russian Orthodox Church. The June 16 elections also brought to the fore another variant of Great Russian chauvinism in Aleksandr Lebed, a former general who is an admirer of rightist dictators like Pinochet of Chile. Yeltsin picked Lebed as his top national security advisor after June 16, in exchange for his support in the run-off election on July 3.

What enabled Yeltsin to do so well in the elections is that he has moved much closer to Zyuganov's position by advocating a stronger Russian state, a more assertive foreign policy vis-a-vis the West, and a rejection of any degree of independence for Chechnya. Yeltsin as well as Zyuganov and Lebed also advocated many of the positions associated with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the ultra-nationalist who won 25% of the vote in parliamentary elections several years ago. That Zhirinovskiy won only 6% of the vote in the first round signifies not a move away

(Continued on page 5)

ON THE INSIDE

From The Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya • The single dialectic in philosophy and organization page 4
As Others See Us • On 'Lenin, Hegel and Western Marxism' page 11
Youth • Open letter to ISO youth .. page 11

1. For a comprehensive view of the theory of state-capitalism as a world stage, see *The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1992).

'Complicating categories' of women's history

by Laurie Cashdan

When the Tenth Berkshires Conference on the History of Women convened in Chapel Hill, N.C., June 7-9, it drew together nearly 2,000 participants for over 200 sessions. This year marked the first time since this conference began in 1973 that it was held outside the Northeast.

The shift dovetailed with this year's conference theme, "Complicating Categories: Women, Gender and Difference." Unfortunately, this theme was not carried through in the plenary sessions, neither of which featured an African-American women's historian as keynote speaker. Nevertheless, that theme proved significant. "Complicating categories" became a political fault line that tested the relationship between feminist scholarship and the larger world of political retrogression and emergent new struggles today.

Woman as Reason

That was true not only in such volatile workshops as "Feminist Theories of Postmodernism in the Study of Social Conflict," where socialist-feminists faced off with poststructuralists. It also surfaced in workshops on Black women in labor and civil rights struggles, which refigured male and white-centered categories of history.

Several Black women scholars bluntly critiqued the categories of social science at a roundtable titled "Representations and Meanings of Black Women's Work," on how scholarship today either combats or colludes with the political Right. Sharon Harley insisted that studies not based on Black women's own voices misrepresent their lives. Bonnie Thornton Dill, who is founding a Race and Gender Institute at University of Maryland with Harley, added, "Women as workers and women as welfare recipients are made into a dichotomy, with the latter made into a problem about family, not work." Such categorization helps demonize welfare recipients.

If Harley and Dill underscored the danger of accepting at face value research on Black women, a late-evening plenary speech by Tanika Sarkar, an Indian feminist scholar, became an urgent wake-up call for theoretical rethinking by left feminists about how we represent women subjects. Indian feminists contest the western feminist view that women are "hidden from history," she asserted. To justify colonialism, the British made Indian women overly visible in their version of history.

Her sharpest critique, however, was aimed at radical Indian scholars today in subaltern studies who, she argued, also make women overly visible. By portraying peasant women as a premodern, traditional subject that inherently resists capitalism, they come dangerously close to the appeal to "tradition" by the new Right. This evades the actual history of reaction and revolution.

Given this concern, it is important to look at another session on women's history in light of right-wing ideology.

Protest at Chowchilla

Chowchilla, Cal.—On June 8 over 100 people demonstrated outside the women's prison against the inhumanity of the prison system, especially toward women. Formerly incarcerated women who are HIV-positive spoke about medical neglect and the impossibility of obtaining information about HIV/AIDS in prison.

Medical care is practically non-existent in prison, turning a two-year sentence into a death penalty, since some prisoners contract tuberculosis and die from lack of treatment. We call for compassionate release of terminally ill women. AIDS-infected women who have white blood counts so low that the prison itself does not want to deal with them are the only ones even considered for release.

Just because "they" put ever more women in prison does not mean we forget about them. Our banners carried the names of women who died in prison and our demands for medical care, rehabilitation, drug treatment and educational opportunities. Most powerful was the cry "we love you sisters inside!" To paraphrase Dostoyevsky, how civilized we are as human beings is measured by the way we treat prisoners.

One participant reflected: "In the four and a half months since my release from Valley State Prison for Women (VSPW), I have become increasingly impassioned by the desire to be a part of the movement toward changing the conditions of women in prison. I knew that it was important to go back in open protest against the detestable practices of the prison as an institution and of individual officials. The idea was that there would be some healing in those sad and aching parts of me so rubbed raw by what I saw, what I experienced, and what I felt while locked in that prison all those 13 months.

"I was not really prepared for the fear and fury I felt when I showed up on the scene and saw two of VSPW's guards. I knew them both. I felt as if I went back into the whole crazy life again. I had a vivid recollection of all the yelling, name calling, strip searches, standing in the cold for long periods of time, pat downs by male guards which were degrading at best.

"I got through it, only to feel a stronger urge to push for change. I have friends inside who still suffer. I want you to know that I am speaking out about your suffering and I will continue to do so until this treatment comes to an end. I love you all. I am with you!"

We distributed the first issue of *The Fire Inside*. For a copy, send \$1 to California Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP), 100 McAllister St., San Francisco, Ca. 94102.

—Urszula Wislanka and Dana Ryan

logical attacks today: "Writing About a Visionary Movement in the Get Real World of the 90s: The History of the U.S. Women's Liberation Movement." This session portrayed writing the history of Women's Liberation as a political act against the Right, but also illuminated some theoretical minefields in such a project.

Moderated by Sheila Rowbotham, the British socialist-feminist, the panel of seven included such well-known women as Susan Brownmiller, author of *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (1975), and Rosalyn Baxandall, an early member of New York Radical Women and Redstockings. Each participant writes on the history of Women's Liberation.

The speakers were especially angered by writers who call themselves feminists yet so rewrite history that they fuel the Right's ideological warfare. Barbara Winslow, for example, a socialist-feminist who co-founded the first Seattle women's liberation organization, repudiated the characterization of feminism as a white middle-class elitist, homophobic, anti-children and anti-sex movement.

The importance of exposing the rewriting of history by not only right-wing politicians but careerist scholars cannot be underestimated. Nevertheless, Winslow's assertions about the past did not explain why six out of the seven panelists were white, most of them experienced Left politicians. Susan Brownmiller, whose study of rape has been roundly critiqued by women of color for its old and deadly use of racial stereotypes, attacked younger scholars but applied no such measure to her own work.

Amy Kesselman, a founder of the Chicago Women's Liberation Union, did draw out problems that emerged as Women's Liberation unfolded in its early years. Conflicts emerged as "people tried to do things, to apply theories." In New Haven, for example, the Women's Liberation group that came out of the New Left decided to muffle their own stand on abortion rights in order to organize Catholic clerical workers at Yale.

Why would organizing working women not have involved a serious theoretical dialogue with them on all questions of women's liberation and radical change? Was this elitist relation between feminist theory and organizing merely a story about "strategic problems," as Kesselman called it? Kesselman's characterization indicated to me that the writers of the history of Women's Liberation may be applying old categories to the dualities that emerged in the movement—on race, on elitism, or on theory and practice. Debates over the categories of women's history can involve a great deal more than getting the story straight, in a period when it is all too easy to find oneself on dangerous ideological ground.



Žene u crnom

Women in Black

The Women in Black have announced that the Fifth International Meeting of the Network of Women's Solidarity Against War will be held, Aug. 1-4, in Novi Sad in Yugoslavia. Participants are expected from Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Kosova, Slovenia, Montenegro, Serbia, Vojvodina and around the world. The call to participate states in part:

"The war in former Yugoslavia has allegedly ended. Those of us who live in this region know that the war continues. The environment in which we live is permeated with the practice and logic of war and militarism. We are witnesses to a state which performs acts of violence against women in their daily lives. This is carried out with the state's nationalistic-militaristic ideology and propaganda, so that women endure patriarchal violence in both the private and public spheres.

"Once again this year we invite you to join us. Come to share joy in strength, sisterhood and friendship. Together we will create new strategies with which we will change the environment we live in, our lives, ourselves."

Contact organizers by e-mail at: WIB-BG@zamir-bg.ztn.apc.org; by phone/fax: 381.11.347.877.

Discussion article: 'Queer by Choice'

Review of *Queer by Choice: Lesbians, Gay Men and the Politics of Identity*, by Vera Whisman (New York: Routledge, 1996)

As we embark upon developing new revolutionary feminist queer philosophy (see "Queer Notions" October 1995 N&L), investigation into Vera Whisman's book reveals many insights. She stirs new waters with this landmark feminist comparative study of lesbian, gay male, and bisexual identity, analyzing differences between queer women and men regarding views and experiences of homosexuality. Whisman bravely challenges those interested in queer liberation to begin their theoretical inquiry from a radical and inclusive feminist position open to conceptions of sexuality as a choice.

Diving into questions of choice and sexuality have traditionally been considered taboo in the dominant queer discourse because of claims made by the religious Right that homosexuality is a choice, and therefore those who choose not to change are morally reprehensible and deserve no "special rights." Most queers in Whisman's study, men and women alike, steer away from ideas of homosexuality as a choice because "they consider it a dangerous foray into territory controlled by homophobic discourse. When they repudiate choice, they are saying something positive about homosexuality."

But Whisman contends the claim of, "I had no



Dykes march June 29

New York—This year's Lesbian Pride march drew several thousand women and some men and children, who walked, danced and shouted down Fifth Avenue on June 29. The annual event comes the day before the huge Gay and Lesbian march that marks the anniversary of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion.

Las Buenas Amigas, a group of Latina lesbians, was particularly joyful as they walked, calling out slogans and songs that celebrated who they are.

The demonstrators also had a keen awareness of the need to keep fighting for their rights as lesbians, especially in light of recent bias-related murders. On June 1, Lollie Winans and Julianne Williams were found with their throats slashed at a campsite on the Appalachian Trail in Virginia. During the march, women expressed their outrage at these murders by screaming together.

Other activists passed out petitions to the president to change his position against gay marriage. Clinton is supporting the Defense of Marriage Act currently pending in Congress. This law would probably not prevent states from marrying gay and lesbian couples, but would create two classes of married couples—gays and lesbians would be denied federal protections and benefits.

Others rejected further appeals to the Democratic Party, which many gays supported in 1992 only to have it betray all its promises.

—Participant

Chicago—At least 500 women took part in Chicago's first Annual Dyke March, organized by the Lesbian Avengers, on the eve of the Gay and Lesbian Pride Parade. Speakers made clear that "this is not a parade, it's a march"; its "context is political." The march grew out of the need to confront harassment and assaults on queer women by gay men at previous Pride Parades. Lesbian Avengers and Women's Action Coalition speakers focused on men who grabbed and verbally abused women who marched bare-breasted. It was moving to see a handful of gay men cheering on the march.

Other women I spoke with felt the time had come for "women to organize ourselves because the Pride Parade has always been male-dominated, male-focused, and the men have always set the agenda." Another said that within the queer community there still exists the "pecking order," and many gay men feel "lesbians need to be kept in their place as women."

Candace Gingrich was the first speaker, her presence directly confronting her brother Newt's "Contract on America." Other speakers represented a multitude of political/personal struggles. However, there was a glaring lack of Black and Asian-American speakers despite the significant presence of Black and Asian-American women marching.

It was a high-powered, serious and fun march, where queer women of all colors not only protested ugly, anti-human conditions their lives are faced with, but celebrated the beauty and humanness they find in themselves.

—Sonia Bergonzi

choice," does not challenge the heterosexist status quo, and leaves intact insidious assumptions that homosexual behavior is amoral, undesirable and unnatural. Insisting "I'm this way because I was born this way," does not lead to the total uprooting necessary to create a non-homophobic world.

In addition, many more women than men give accounts of having chosen their sexuality, showing that the dominant coming-out account which claims an innate, consistent experience of homosexuality excludes the experience of a majority of lesbians, as well as bisexuals. Whisman calls for a non-essentialist politics which broadens the range of sexual possibilities while disrupting the assumptions of oppressive social norms.

Refuting the idea that a "scientific" approach which attempts to legitimize homosexuality through genetic findings can lead to more freedoms for queers, Whisman insists, "it is not scientific research but political struggle that will protect gay men, lesbians, and bi-sexuals." Queers can battle heterosexism by asserting that, "homosexuality is a perfectly reasonable choice to make."

What makes Whisman's findings fascinating is how she and those she interviews show creative resistance through choosing to become homosexual or bisexual in the face of extreme pressures to be heterosexual. These

(Continued on page 10)

Fighting for a normal day at Delta Pride

Indianola, Miss.—We start negotiations on the new contract with Delta Pride management at the end of July, and the union has asked all the members to state their top three demands. The first demand that everyone is talking about is that we need a *start time and a stop time* for production, like 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. After the 1990 strike we got it in the contract that all time over 8 hours will be paid at time-and-a-half. We did this so that management would stop working us 10 and 12 hours a day, killing people and making it impossible for working mothers—which most of the workers here are—to take care of our families.

Up until recently, this really cut down on the overtime. But now we have this new management team from Canada running the plant, and they decided to cut the workforce and make the rest of us work longer hours. We have been working about 55 hours a week, week after week. They say it is cheaper than hiring more workers.

This summer they have cut back on the air conditioning in the plant. They say this saves money on electricity, but they don't care what happens to us. The fish are iced down, but we are sweating in 90 degrees. One woman fell out sick this week; other workers are just calling in sick. It's not just the longer hours and the heat. It's also that we are working harder and faster, trying to keep up production and get out of there sooner. One day 49 workers called in sick in the trim department, out of 120 total. We started at 8 a.m. and ran production to 8:30 p.m. We had to do the same amount of fish with nearly half the workers gone. If you weren't sick before then, you surely were sick after.

They have also cut back the total number of workers at all three plants—Delta Main, Delta South, and Belzoni. Last year at those three plants there were over 1,000 workers. Now we have about 750, and we are putting out as much fish. Some of this is because of automation. They have eliminated nearly all the band saws and the manual lines in the kill department and they brought in two new machines—the 156 and the 184—on five different lines. This cut out about 50 or 60 jobs this year. But most of the reduction in workforce is just from longer hours and harder, faster work. They are shortening our lives to make themselves more money.

When we say we want a start time and a stopping time that we can count on to run our own lives, they say they can't do that because we are working with a perishable commodity, fish. They say they have more orders, and more fish to process. But only two months ago, they

closed down the whole Belzoni plant because they said they had a "fish shortage." Which is it? If they hired enough workers, they could give us reasonable hours. But that seems to be the one thing they won't do. What we want in the contract is a normal, reasonable work day, with a paycheck you can live on. But they act like that is out of the question.

Now they have a new money saving trick. They say that on Aug. 5 they will totally cut out the training department. All 62 workers in it, most with high seniority, would have to go back to the line and lose from 70¢ to 90¢ an hour pay. So you could have 12 or 14 years seniority and be back to making \$5.60 an hour.

The pay is still Mississippi poverty wages; we have never ended that yet. And we still don't have any pension plan at all. Workers with 15 years seniority are looking at their future and saying: "I won't have anything to fall back on."

Many people I know are saying we will have to strike this year. Some workers are saying we need to strike just to get some rest. They might be right.

—Delta Main worker, UFCW 1529



Over 6,000 workers struck June 24 over permanent two-tier conditions at New York hospitals and nursing homes.

From IWW to Pride at Work

Oakland, Cal.—Over 200 queer workers, union organizers, and political thinkers attended Pride at Work, a gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered labor conference in Oakland in June, in conjunction with the San Francisco Pride celebrations. Many workshops concerned pragmatic and reformist issues, such as domestic partner benefits, political action against the religious Right, harassment issues, and gay/lesbian caucuses within unions.

However, important voices of resistance were heard from youth and people of color, especially during discussions of affirmative action. This included some who had helped organize a successful unionizing drive at the largely white, gay male San Francisco AIDS Foundation. Neither the sexuality of the bosses, nor the liberal rhetoric of the unions, rendered them above criticism.

The most inspiring moments connected us to a revolutionary past. Harry Hay, the 84-year old gay Left founder of the Mattachine Society, an early "homophile" group from the '50s and '60s, spoke of his "real" education, received in the fields from the Wobblies when he was a teenager. Hay reminded us that labor, the Left and queers have been linked often in this century, but the astonishing proof of this was given in a slide presentation by the gay labor historian Allan Berube.

Entitled "No Race-Baiting, No Red-Baiting, No Queen-Baiting: the Marine Cooks and Stewards Union from the Depression to the Cold War," Berube's work reflects this militant union's interracial nature, the presence of open leftists, and the acknowledged presence of gay leaders and members, both Black and white, in its ranks during the 1930s and '40s.

He has detailed how the union supported the rights of Black, Asian, queer, and women workers, including a spontaneous strike to protest the exclusion of a Black woman worker from a previously segregated job. As one of Berube's principal informants told him (a white gay man who is still alive and participating in ACT-UP actions): in the union we "took the dignity that was in all of us and built it up—equality was in the air we breathed."

But the question this presentation raised for me is how we can learn from these highpoints of the past, and not only in a tactical sense. The need for such a philosophy of revolution was clear during the weekend of pride activities in the Bay Area, including the Dyke March and the Gay Pride March.

The fact that half a million people came to celebrate queer pride, on a record-breaking hot day, in the midst of a deep retrogression in thought (that dares to attack love and creativity with hypocrisies such as "family values" and "protection of marriage")—this is a striking testimony to the strength and depth of human power. While the humanist unity of Left and Queer thought exemplified in the talks given by Harry Hay and Allan Berube might seem utopian to some, the joyous crowd in San Francisco should serve to remind us that "the ideal and the real are never as far apart as the philistines, in and out of power, would make it appear" (American Civilization on Trial, p. 34).

—Jennifer Pen

Self-limiting Labor Party

Cleveland Ohio—A huge banner proclaiming "History in the Making" backdrop the founding convention of a Labor Party held June 6-9 in Cleveland. The 1,367 delegates, more than twice the number originally expected, hammered out a constitution and program under tight bureaucratic control of the endorsing unions that sent the large majority of delegates.

The four original endorsing unions, Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; United Electrical; Longshore Workers; and Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, were joined just before the convention by the United Mine Workers and the American Federation of Government Employees. Large contingents were also sent by the California Nurses Association and the Farm Labor Organizing Committee.

The self-limiting focus of the Labor Party will be to increase its membership, with union endorsements and grassroots organizing, in order to exert pressure on both major political parties to support labor interests. Opposition from those who wanted to immediately field their own local candidates and endorse independent candidates who support labor objectives, was beaten back, but they do not bar individual members working for politicians, an undoubted bow to the AFL-CIO that supports President Clinton.

Economic demands that would be impossible to achieve within capitalism, yet which nevertheless assumed the continuation of capitalism, dominated the 16-page program. It concluded a proposal for a constitutional amendment guaranteeing employment for all, a 32-hour week with no pay reduction and a \$10-an-hour minimum wage.

It supported power for worker-inspectors to shut down dangerous jobs, repeal of the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act, and a ban on striker replacement. The originally proposed platform supported immigration rights, affirmative action and workers' child care and opposed sexual harassment. Opposition to hate crimes such as church, temple and synagogue burning and Congressional redistricting that dilutes minority representation, however, were left out of the original program and had to be raised as amendments by the Black caucus.

An amendment to add "support for safe, legal abortion" was defeated because the word abortion was considered "divisive." One Detroit delegate exclaimed, "Can you believe this? Our Labor Party is to the right of President Clinton on abortion rights!"

Detroit newspaper strikers received special recognition, and read a statement of their determination to continue their struggle until victory. Delegates voted unanimously for a national march on Detroit in support of the newspaper strikers.

The emotional highpoint, however, came outside of the convention hall on Friday following the **Cleveland Plain Dealer** report that Cleveland Mayor White was seeking state legislation to give him a free hand to privatize public services and oppose the city's service unions. Convention delegates voted to adjourn early and marched a block away to city hall to confront the mayor with chants of "Mayor White Must Go!" and "Privatize, We'll Organize!" The delegates spilled out into the streets, blocking traffic and leaving the totally surprised and unprepared police force to stand helplessly by.

At the next LP convention, scheduled for 1998, a review of the progress made in achieving its goals will be assessed. But the failure to project a truly different course for America, compromising on so many vital issues, leaves this nascent Labor Party with serious questions about its future developments.

—Andy Phillips

No victory at Trailmobile

Chicago—The five-months-plus lockout of United Paperworkers International Union members at the Trailmobile plant in Charlestown, Ill. ended July 1 with a vote to accept a company offer made at a June 26 bargaining session. Less than two-thirds of the local members voted on the proposal though, and of those who did, 30% were against it. No scabs will be retained by the company, but 700 of the 1200 pre-lockout work force will be left jobless by the agreement—and those who are called back will face a reclassification process which will result in lower wages for workers with little seniority.

Local 7591 Vice President Kevin Grant characterized the settlement as a "sell-out." "The International didn't support us like they should have. I'd like to say that I have faith in my President, but I think he felt pressure to settle the thing after what happened in Decatur. He's portraying it as a victory, but I don't see how anyone can call it that."

—Strike supporter

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N7

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

Editor's note: We publish excerpts of Dunayevskaya's speech on "Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1986-87," delivered to the national Convention of News and Letters Committees in September 1986, because of the way it speaks to many of the themes discussed in our "Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1996-97" (see pages 1, 5-8 of this issue). We publish here the final two paragraphs from Section A of its final part, entitled "The Single Dialectic in Philosophy," and excerpts from Section B, entitled "The Single Dialectic in Organization." The full document can be found in the Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, Vol. 13, microfilm #11035.

For Marxist-Humanists, Perspectives makes Retropective not just a remembrance of things past, but such an inwardizing and projecting of Marx's whole body of ideas that only then does one fully embark on the new of one's own age, so that the discontinuity with the old is historically justifiable because it now shows its roots in the continuity.

The difficulty that Marxist-Humanists have had with this year—indeed, what revolutionaries have always encountered difficulty with—is the sudden recognition that it is the Universal that is crucial, not the Particular. That by itself is by no means sufficient because the Universal must particularize itself. In fact, to catch the "moment" when the Universal particularizes itself and when it doesn't, is the key to everything.

The Single Dialectic in Organization

Because it is essential not to let go of the dialectic in the body of ideas and in the concrete perspectives for a single year, it becomes necessary to return to a final look at the Dialectic in Hegel. What may have sounded very abstract when I sent around the page of "Random Thoughts," on the relationship of the first to the last work of Hegel, is what is relevant here.¹ I stressed the fact that all of the ideas that it took a quarter of a century for Hegel to work out were already present, even if only implicitly, in the Phenomenology of Mind.

Serb intellectuals defend genocide

Prague—Serbian academicians surprised public opinion twice at the beginning of June. At the annual meeting of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, ten of them signed a letter to the International Tribunal against War Crimes in the Hague in which they voiced their support for Radovan Karadzic, calling him "a great leader of all Serbs." Out of 20 signatories of the letter, the best known name is that of Mihailo Markovic, until recently vice-chairman of Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia.

The authors of the letter claim that the accusations of war crimes against Karadzic is not based on facts but is motivated by political and other aims. Karadzic, they believe, cannot be regarded as guilty of crimes against human rights and war laws since he signed as of July 13, 1992, a decree respecting the human rights of prisoners.

The second surprise came from the Academy's chairman, Alexander Despic. He called the problem of Kosova "the most important strategic problem regarding both the present and future of Serbia." Despic was speaking about the Albanians in Kosova who are experiencing a population explosion. According to Despic, this explosion means that in a few dozens years Serbia will be a country of two nations with totally different languages and cultural roots.

—Stephen Steiger

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Single dialectic of philosophy/organization

It is true that Hegel himself didn't fully grasp that when it first poured out of him spontaneously. Post-Hegelians are still busy talking about its chaotic structure. When something bursts forth from a genius and has no strictly logical form, is hardly more than instinct, everyone, including the genius, is ready to attribute it to the chaotic state of youth. But, in fact, this is where instinct is not just instinct.

Long before he was able to articulate it to his own satisfaction, the essence of the final three syllogisms of Hegel's Philosophy of Mind was in the Phenomenology. What spelling out the structure in the Encyclopedia in syllogistic form — Logic-Nature-Mind — showed was that the Philosophy of Nature was the middle, the Mediation. That is to say, Nature, not Logic, is the true first. It took Hegelians more than a century to discover that Logic was "replaced," and what Otto Poeggeler said in 1961 is still new and unacceptable to Hegelians.² Paragraphs 575, 576, 577 further reveal that a new unity is needed between Nature (Action, Practice) and Cognition. That unity, far from ending it, is a new beginning. The point is that the unity, or totality, is either a new beginning or it is no more than a quantitative summation.

The second syllogism [Nature-Mind-Logic], however, is not the final, not the second negation. With the second syllogism, Hegel still felt that his body of ideas needed to be worked out in full. That is what the third paragraph — #577 — is about. It is the second negation, and Hegel's "Eternity" leaves plenty of doors open. Marx's greatest transformation of Hegel's "Eternity" is "revolution in permanence." You can't just repeat it as a phrase, as "conclusion." That is what first begins a revolutionary's tasks, as it must be concretized for our age.

The unity, or totality, is either a new beginning which determines the end, or it contains the greatest contradiction all over again, as Hegel showed in the very first paragraph of the Absolute Idea. There he referred to Absolute Idea itself as containing the greatest contradiction.³

In a word, when Hegel concluded Chapter 2 of Section 3, "The Idea," which showed the unity of action and cognition, he said "this is the Absolute Idea" (which made

Lenin so very happy despite the fact that Hegel was showing that it is only the threshold of the new Idea, and as everyone knows, from the threshold you can either go forward or fall backward). As you may know, that's when I began my fight with Lenin, in 1953, when he said that the final paragraph of the Science of Logic could be thrown out — but at that time I forgave him on the ground that he hadn't lived through Stalinism...

[The category of] post-Marx Marxism as a pejorative made translucent how crucial was that missing link—philosophy, not only for revolutionaries who had not returned to Marx's roots in the Hegelian dialectic, but even for a great revolutionary like Lenin who had, and without whose ground, in the philosophy of revolution, we couldn't have developed the Absolute Idea. Yet Lenin had not grounded himself in that missing link, philosophy, when it came to organization, "the Party."

This produced the other new chapter for Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, Chapter 11 — "The Philosopher of Permanent Revolution Creates Ground for Organization."

Without the key importance of that missing link, philosophy, we couldn't have fully spelled out the full body of ideas in the succeeding year, especially the section we called "Not By Practice Alone" in our 1984-85 Perspectives.⁴ The following year, we were again stressing "organizational responsibility for Marxist-Humanism."

As the Draft Perspectives for [1986-87] puts it:

"Self-discipline is not the absence of discipline; it is the absence of an order to be disciplined. Self-discipline is born out of the Idea of Freedom as Absolute and History as not only past, but history-in-the-making which Marx saw as the actualization of freedom, its struggles throughout human development. The long, hard road to revolution cannot be achieved if History is skipped over; history-in-the-making, as well as in the past, is inseparable from the self in self-determination of the Idea of freedom."

This year the objective situation needed some practicing dialecticians...The need to organizationally concretize philosophy anew each year naturally is given new urgency now that Ronald Reagan's "Changed World" has made counter-revolution so tower over the seething discontent of the masses in the world that the very thought of revolution seems impossible. Here I want to tell you that I have introduced some changes into the title for the book. It is now *Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: The Party and Forms of Organization Born out of Spontaneity*.⁵

By organization being kept inseparable from philosophy, we see that there is no way for dialectics to be in two different places, one for organization and the other for philosophy. There is a single dialectic of objective/subjective.

It is not ended in that relationship. That is where the task first begins. That is the Absolute Method. No other method will do. This is why Hegel, once he criticized the empiric and critical method as one—the second attitude to objectivity—proved that if any philosopher tried not to go to the Absolute Method, the dialectic, he would regress into the third attitude to objectivity. And that is why Marx never departed from Hegel's dialectic of thought, even in his discovery of a new continent of thought and of revolution. That is what remains the ground of Marxist-Humanism.

VOICES FROM WITHIN THE PRISON WALLS

States fleece prisoners

by D. A. Sheldon

A new wave of legislative policy has been initiated against California and Iowa prisoners, effectively allowing prisoncrats to deduct 20% of all incoming funds from outside sources allotted toward prisoners accounts in order to pay court-ordered restitution. These funds usually come from family or friends of a prisoner to aid in the expense of hygiene, postage, and other necessities, which prisoners are forced to buy at inflated prices.

By cutting a portion of these funds, the majority of prisoners who receive a small amount, for example five dollars a month from a family member, will suffer increased hardship. Prisoncrats assert they are justified in their actions, stating that all inmates' basic needs are furnished by the state, while confiscated funds could be better used in compensating victims, and paying back attorney fees and court cost.

In reality these funds don't reach their intended destination; instead the State of Iowa, for instance, banks the money in a state financial institution to accumulate interest which is pocket lining for state coffers. Whereas California regulations allow the further collection of a 10% "administrative handling fee" from the initial deduction to pay the expense of stealing 20% in the first place! Furthermore the practice is illegal, because an inmate's prison account is a protected property interest that cannot be taken without due process.

Another way to look at this is that outside sources are being taxed for the right to send money to a prisoner. Eventually other state prison systems will enact similar oppressive policies, once legal challenges filed by prisoners in Iowa and California have been decided. It's predicted the courts will rule in favor of prisoncrats, due to the Federal judges' recent backlash against prisoners' constitutional rights.

1. This refers to Dunayevskaya's "Random Thoughts" on Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind, written on June 26, 1986, as part of her work on her projected book "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy." The document can be found in the Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, Vol. 13, microfilm #10769.

2. In 1961 Otto Poeggeler, an important scholar of Hegel as well as Heidegger, wrote an analysis of the final three syllogisms of Hegel's Philosophy of Mind, arguing that "In opposition to the usual interpretations of the Hegelian text, I should like to propose the following: that the real science of Spirit is not the Logic but the philosophy of Spirit."

3. At the start of the chapter on "The Absolute Idea" in his Science of Logic, Hegel writes, "The Absolute Idea has now turned out to be the identity of the Theoretical and the Practical Idea; each of these by itself is one-sided and contains the Idea only as a sought Beyond and an unattained goal...[it] contains the highest opposition in itself." See Hegel's Science of Logic, trans. by A.V. Miller (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1991), p. 824.

4. This essay, "Not by Practice Alone: The Movement from Theory," is available in The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya (Chicago: News and Letters, 1992).

5. Dunayevskaya's work on this book was cut short by her death on June 9, 1987. Her many notes for the book can be found in the Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, Vol. 13.

TODAY'S CRISES AND THE SEARCH FOR A TOTAL UPROOTING

(Continued from page 1)

from his positions, but rather the extent to which the other candidates appropriated his ultra-nationalism.

What Aleksandr Yanov said of Zyuganov in a recent issue of *Moscow News* could as well be said of all the major presidential aspirants: "Having traded in his orthodox Marxism [sic] for nationalism, he is poised to play the bloody role of a Russian Slobodan Milosevic."

Given all this, one may wonder what ever happened to the Russian "democrats." They are by now totally discredited, thanks to their illusion that it would be possible to break up the structures of Communism from above. They never tried to rely on the revolutionary action of the masses from below. Thanks to this self-limiting conception the Communist rulers were never driven from their control of production and the state. They instead retained their positions of power, and embraced privatization of industry and free markets as a way to secure their personal control over production.

The emptiness of the alternative to Stalinism presented by the democrats helps explain the present move to the Right. As Otto Latsis, a columnist for *Izvestia* said, "What is the overwhelming idea that [the democrats] were offering? The Communists at least have a description of a society in the future. I can prove it is a deceit, but they've got a description. The democrats have never volunteered it."²

That Russia is now confronting a resurgent statism does not mean privatization of industry will be reversed. Privatization, after all, has largely benefited the old rulers by providing them with personal ownership over the factories and firms which they formerly managed in the name of "the Plan." The effort to strengthen the authoritarian state is fully compatible with retaining much of industry in the hands of private entrepreneurs. The multinationals who have held back from investing in Russia are well aware of this; they know from their massive investments in China how important statist repression is for a "favorable business climate."

As one Russian analyst pointed out, "The degree of state or private ownership of the domestic economy is no longer important to the IMF or World Bank, provided that foreign investments are guaranteed and that the possibility remains of influencing the government's financial policies."³

What does threaten to be transformed by the elections are Russia's foreign relations, especially with the U.S. The rise of Great Russian chauvinism opens the door to new conflicts with the West. It should not be forgotten that Russia still possesses over 10,000 nuclear weapons.

Today's situation confirms what we said after the collapse of the USSR in 1991: "While the Russian leaders are [for now] fully willing to bow to the U.S. on an array of fronts, especially since they have the illusion this will help them obtain Western economic assistance...the underlying basis of superpower competition has not been removed."⁴

This does not mean Yeltsin is in for a smooth ride. The social crisis is intractable and becoming deeper. The discontent of the masses is enormous, even if it has not moved in an anti-capitalist direction. As the persistent struggle of the Chechnyan people against insurmountable odds shows, the masses are not going to take Yeltsin's dictates lying down.

B. High-tech capitalism and sweated labor

The Clinton-Dole presidential election campaign here at home may seem the total opposite of Russia's, since it is hardly generating any degree of interest or excitement. This has less to do with their "lackluster" personalities than with the utter emptiness of their respective political programs.

Unlike 1992, when Clinton ran for president by promising to use the federal government to spur capital investment, job training, and business development in the inner cities, this time around he makes no mention of such issues. In declaring that "the era of big government is over," he has positioned himself so far to the Right as to be nearly indistinguishable from Dole, who says our economic problems cannot be resolved by government intervention. Neither shows the slightest interest in addressing what can be done to resolve the endemic problems of permanent mass unemployment, growing poverty, and declining living conditions.

This can be seen from the fate of Gingrich's "Contract on America." It has not figured as an item in the election campaign so far, largely because Clinton has by now accepted most of it—which is not to say the rules are all exactly the same. As the recent Israeli elections showed,

the victory of a far-Rightist backed up by religious fundamentalists can have a devastating impact on gay rights, women's rights to abortion, and civil rights. The Christian Coalition in the U.S. has its own regressive agenda in store for us in the event of a victory by Dole.

Of crucial importance is the impact of such retrogression on Black America. While the administration has taken a kid-gloves approach to white militia groups like the Montana Freeman, it has failed to nab those who have burned dozens of Black churches throughout the South. Just as in the 1960s the complicity of the FBI failed to uncover those who attacked civil rights activists and youth integrating southern universities, so today the powers-that-be cannot muster the strength to take an effective stand against attacks on African-Americans.

This coincides with an unprecedented crisis in the Black community. The U.S. not only has the highest overall infant mortality rate of the eight industrialized Western nations; the rate for Blacks is twice that of whites. As for life expectancy, white men can expect to live an average of 72.9 years, 8.3 years longer than Black men, who make it on average to 64.6. White women live an average of 5.8 years longer than Black women.

Moreover, child poverty has reached the highest level since the War on Poverty began in 1964—soaring to 15 million. Three-fourths of all poor children in our cities are Black or Latino. Black poverty has not only risen to three times the rate of white poverty, but Blacks are five times more likely than whites to live in concentrated poverty areas.

The only "solutions" Clinton or Dole offer to this are: 1) Warehousing the permanent army of the unemployed in the exploding number of prisons with young men taken prisoner in their racially selective "war on drugs." This is creating a situation which leads us to ask whether a new Attica uprising is waiting to happen. 2) Cutting welfare by blaming welfare mothers and teen pregnancy for all our problems. This ignores the fact that many working women have had to turn to welfare since they cannot feed their families on poverty wages.

It becomes clear that youth, especially Black and Latino youth, have become a "throw-away generation." The connections were not lost at the Washington, D.C. rally organized by the Children's Defense Fund at the beginning of June, where one of the hand-lettered signs demanded: "Build Schools, Not Prisons!"

These conditions show that the social crises gripping this nation have become so deep, structural, and intractable that the rulers no longer even pretend that the power of the state can resolve them. They are instead using the state to impose draconian austerity measures, especially against the unemployed and those forced into conditions of low-wage, sweated labor.

Different as the electoral campaigns in the U.S. and Russia may appear, what underlies them both is the intractable nature of the economic crisis gripping the world economy. For despite all the hoopla about the "new stage" reached with globalized high-tech production, distribution, and information, no new era of economic development has resulted from it. Though for the past two decades capitalism has expanded by intensifying the rate of the exploitation of labor through such techniques as "lean and flexible" production, automation, and reliance on sweated labor, there has been no corresponding increase in the productivity of labor—the factor which remains the key to economic growth.⁵

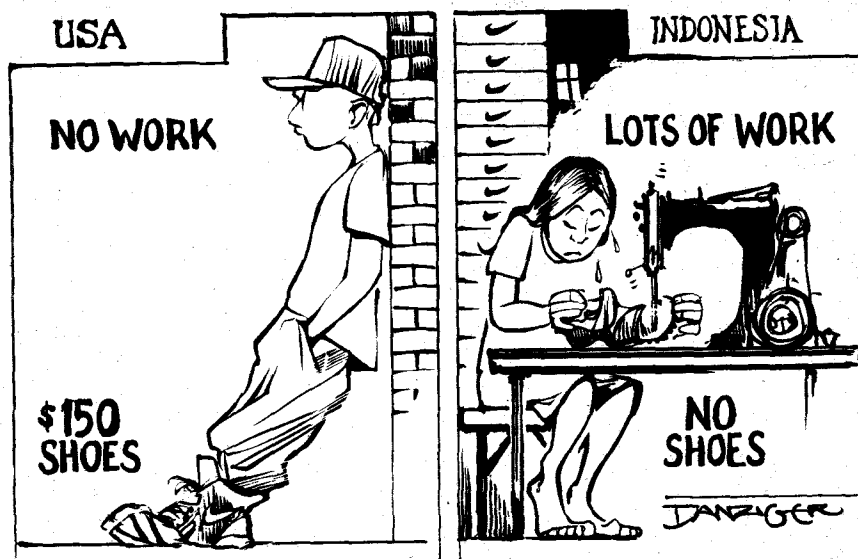
Since 1974, the U.S. economy has grown at an average rate of only 2.3% a year, compared to 4.3% from 1948-73. The rate of productivity growth has dropped by even more—from an average of 2.7% from 1948-73 to only 0.9% since 1974. Nor is this only true of the U.S. Despite all the investments made in computers, labor-saving devices, and high-technology over the past two decades, the rate of growth in the productivity of labor in the world's 16 richest nations fell by 50% over the last two decades. Multifactor productivity—the productivity of labor and capital combined—has grown only 0.3% a year since 1974, only a quarter of the rate from 1948-73.

This is in spite of huge investments in high-tech automation and computerization. When personal computers were first introduced into offices, they were expected to raise productivity. They instead lowered it, even as they displaced workers en masse. Though large productivity increases have been reported in some select sectors of manufacturing, the "high-tech revolution" has not delivered the promised productivity growth there either. In response, the capitalists increasingly rely on such strategies as "just in time" production and "vendor-managed inventories."

With "just in time" production, computer systems are used to shorten the time-span between ordering of materials, production, and delivery of goods. An example is the auto industry. When GM receives a truck with car seats, the seats are already arranged in the exact order of models and sizes matching the cars coming down the assembly line. The driver simply backs the truck into the dock, opens it, and the seats go directly into the cars—when all goes according to "plan." Just-in-time production dictates that a plant have on hand only what it needs for the next 48 hours of operation.

5. See "Workers and the World Economy" by Ethan Kapstein, *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 1996, to see how even apologists for capitalism admit that the high-tech revolution has failed to produce the desired productivity growth in manufacturing and services.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO NIKE



This drive to shorten the time-span between delivery, production, and distribution is also leading companies to try to make products that are already ordered, rather than selling what they've already made. Through such techniques as "vendor-managed inventory," the capitalists imagine they can create a "seamless integration" of production and distribution.

Such strategies are aimed at making the worker an appendage not just to the machine, but to an ever-shifting and flexible labor process. Yet the capitalists do not seem able to take account of workers' resistance to such restructuring and speed-up. Marx long ago anticipated these developments: "The flexibility of capital, its indifference to the particular forms of the labor process it acquires, is extended by capital to the worker. He is required to be capable of the same flexibility or versatility in the way he applies his labor-power....[The capitalist] pushes to one side all legal and other extra-economic obstructions standing in the way of this versatility."⁶

What drives the capitalists to utilize such strategies is not the "success" of high-tech in boosting the productivity of labor, but rather its failure to do so. Faced with a persistent drag on the rate of productivity growth, capital seeks out new forms of "lean" and "flexible" production as well as new sources of sweated labor. This continued reliance on sweatshop conditions, both in the South USA and throughout the Third World, is nowhere more evident than in capitalism's increasing use of child labor.

This failure to attain the desired rates of growth and profits flows from capital's inner contradiction—its failure to reproduce its only value-creating substance, living labor. Today's realities confirm Marx's contention that capital's crises flow from its inability to give full employment to labor because of the drive to reduce the proportion of living labor relative to capital at the point of production. For even when productivity growth is attained in a particular plant or section of industry through high-tech restructuring, the workers laid off as a result of it are no longer able to find employment in industries that are similarly productive. They are forced into the low-paid, low-productive service sector—or into permanent

(Continued on page 6)

6. Karl Marx, "Results of the Immediate Process of Production," *Capital*, Vol. I (New York: Vintage, 1977), p. 1013.

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2. Quoted in "Battling Against his Own Blunders" by David Hoffman, *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, May 27-June 2, 1996.

3. Boris Kagarlitsky, "The Situation in Russia in April-May 1996," (from the Internet)

4. See "Mass revolt, deep crises and pull of old haunt the 'new' Russia," by Peter Wermuth, *News & Letters*, October 1991.

TODAY'S CRISES AND THE SEARCH FOR A TOTAL UPROOTING

(Continued from page 5)

unemployment. The more capital innovates, the more it encounters barriers to increasing its overall rate of productivity.

Far from being limited to the U.S., this is true of state-capitalism on a world scale. From the birth of state-capitalism in Russia in the 1930s, it has been dogged by the low productivity of labor. Far from being a sign of their "backwardness," it expressed the depth of the Russian workers' revolt. Though Russia did achieve significant economic growth when it came to arms production, over the long run this only accentuated the overall crisis of the Russian economy.

When the economic crisis became especially acute in the 1980s, a host of solutions were offered by the Russian rulers, for overcoming the low productivity of labor. Mikhail Gorbachev's approach upon coming to power was to follow that of his mentor, Yuri Andropov, by seeking to raise labor productivity by: 1) increasing investments in machine tools and electronics, and 2) exhorting the workers to work harder through "acceleration" (*uskoreniye*, also translated as "speed-up"). When this failed to put a dent in the problem, he coupled this with a call for "restructuring" of industry (*perestroika*) through "market incentives." The idea was that by freeing up prices, privatizing industry, and moving away from a centrally planned economy, the managers of industry would find the key to unlock the riddle of low productivity.

It was Yeltsin who implemented this with his "free market" shock therapy starting in 1991. But it has not led to any serious rise in the productivity of labor. This shows that as important as the events of 1991 were in bringing down the hated totalitarian regime, the move toward a market economy failed to take Russia beyond the confines of the contradictions endemic to state-capitalism. State-capitalism hung on, only now with a free market mask.

In the same period in which the fetish of the free market swept through Russia and Eastern Europe, the fetish of high-tech dominated discussion in the West. Yet high-tech has failed to provide capitalism with the means to grow on a ever-expanding scale. So intractable is this crisis of accumulation that no technical or governmental "fix" can resolve it. The various forms by which the rulers respond to this crisis—in the U.S., declaring that "the era of big government is over" while building more prisons, whereas in Russia, declaring that a stronger state is needed to handle the dislocations resulting from economic collapse—reflect the extent to which the tech-

nological restructuring has failed to extract capitalism from its internal barriers to self-expansion.

When the economic crisis in Russia brought forth a new generation of rulers grouped around Yuri Andropov in the 1980s, Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S., wrote: "No, it is not in 'high technology' that one can find the great contradictions wracking capitalism, private as well as state. One needs, instead, to dig deep into the basic capital/labor relationship. Though the Russians, too, don't know how to overcome it, they do have a name for the current 'low productivity' of Russian labor: 'unemployment within the factory gates.'"⁷

Dunayevskaya concluded that far from representing the "beginning of a new era," Andropov's ascendancy reflected "the final stage of state-capitalism's degeneracy." In light of today's realities, we can add that far from representing some qualitative new stage, high-tech capitalism is instead revealing the final stage of state-capitalism's global degeneracy.

Nowhere is this degeneracy more evident than in the Third World—and most especially in Africa.



Sam Shilowa, general secretary of COSATU, and Mandela.

C. Africa falls off the map

Today's apologists for capitalism like to point to the "booming" economy on China's coast, the rapid industrialization of Indonesia, and Malaysia's construction of the world's tallest office building as proof of its ability to develop the technologically underdeveloped world. They neglect to mention that such development is a strictly regional phenomenon, arrived at only under specific conditions. Indonesia, for instance, became a haven for international capital only after a three-decade long period of intense repression which reduced wages to half that of China's.

Though China and the Pacific Rim are now major engines of the world economy, Africa has been totally written out of even regional capital development. Capitalists no longer pretend to be interested in developing Africa; instead of stimulating any investment, they are pulling out the few they have. Their prevailing view is "Who cares about Africa; it is not important to us; leave it to the IMF and the World Bank."⁸

During the Cold War the West used Africa, not as a haven for capital investment, but as a dumping ground for arms purchases. Now that the Cold War is over, the continent is disregarded altogether. Africa is "falling off the map." Since 1974 wages have dropped by 25% in sub-Saharan Africa, while the number of Africans living in absolute poverty will grow from 200 million to 300 million in the next decade.

It should come as no surprise that the West's indifference to conditions in Africa persists even in the face of

7. See "Andropov's Ascendancy Reflects Final Stage of State-Capitalist Degeneracy," by Raya Dunayevskaya, *The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism*, p. 144.

8. This is quoted in "Africa: Falling Off the Map?" by Thomas M. Callaghy, *Current History*, January 1994.

outright genocide. Neither the murder of hundreds of thousands of Tutsis and anti-racist Hutus in Rwanda, nor the ongoing crises in Liberia, Zaire, and Sierra Leone, seem to hold the slightest attention of the Clinton administration. The pattern for this was set with the U.S. response to events in Bosnia. After sitting back and watching as 200,000 were slaughtered there, the U.S.

used the Dayton Accords to solidify the partition of Bosnia along ethnic lines. Just as the U.S. sabotaged the defense of Bosnia's multiethnic heritage, so it now does nothing to stop the genocidal effort to destroy any possibility of a multiethnic society in Burundi.

This disregard even extends to South Africa. Despite Mandela's hope that foreign investment would flood the country with the victory of the ANC, it has not happened. In response, he is calling on the masses to create a "friendly business environment" by accepting lower wages and living conditions.

After a recent trip to Germany, in which he visited with officials who are imposing an austerity program on German workers, Mandela announced that privatization of state assets is "the fundamental policy of the ANC and it is going to be implemented. The responsibility for creating an investor and trade-friendly environment is for us to take." It is clear that South Africa's workers do not intend to take this lying down. Even Sam Shilowa, general secretary of COSATU, the nation's largest trade union federation which is aligned with the ANC, declared that it "views privatization with total hostility, on the grounds that it would perpetuate the effects of apartheid by failing to redress the inequitable distribution of wealth."

The strikes that have broken out in South Africa in response to the threats of austerity, as well as the ongoing struggles against environmental destruction and military dictatorship in Nigeria, express deep sentiments brewing from beneath the surface. As against the way Africa is being written off the map, we must not lose sight of the human creativity which is sure to be released in new freedom struggles to come. As Raya Dunayevskaya wrote in the chapter on the African revolutions in *Philosophy and Revolution*, "The whole point seems to be to hold on to the principle of creativity, and the contradictory process by which creativity develops" (p. 246).

II. Forces of revolt as reason, philosophy as force of revolt

Philosophic mediation is the middle that first creates from itself the whole.

—Raya Dunayevskaya⁹

A. Facing the specter of retrogression

The need to hold onto the contradictory process by which creativity develops is especially important in light of the fetish of high-tech. For high-tech capitalism has not only generated the illusion that technology has created a "post-industrial information world." It has also obscured new forces of revolt emerging against it.

As we wrote in the Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives 1995-96, "The prevailing view, whether on the part of postmodernists, critical theorists, or independent Marxists, is that the technological transformation of society has reached the point where the subjectivity of the human being has become totally subsumed by the object, that is, the machine. As a result, the effort to relate the idea of freedom to subjects of revolution—whether they be workers, women, Blacks or youth—has been completely abandoned by an array of radical thinkers and activists." Even when subjective resistance is grasped by thinkers, the subjectivity of the idea of freedom itself is totally rejected.

As against this, the events of the past year provide ample proof that capitalism's material conditions continue to be met with new forms of subjective resistance from below. This is especially seen with this year's anti-austerity strikes in Europe. The crisis of European capital has prompted the French and German rulers to openly embark on an effort to reduce workers' wages and social benefits. The massive strikes and demonstrations called in response in France have now spilled over into Germany, where workers have displayed French flags in their banners—a type of internationalism not seen in years.

In the U.S., a new moment in labor was reached with the strike at the Dayton, Ohio GM parts-assembly plant

over outsourcing to non-union shops. For years we have been told that the "high-tech revolution" undermines the ability of workers to effectively challenge capital. Yet the Dayton strike has revealed something very new. The and distribution through strategies like "just in time" production means that any disruption of the supply chain, even if localized, can bring the entire chain to a halt. The ability of a few thousand Dayton workers to shut down virtually all U.S.-GM operations—despite the fact that the union bureaucracy imposed a settlement that largely allows outsourcing to continue—indicates that new challenges to capital are emerging from within the very contours of today's high-tech restructuring.

This can also be seen from other labor struggles, such as the organizing campaigns led by Black working women in the Mississippi Delta and Memphis. It extends to women's liberationists rethinking how to fight the Right in the aftermath of the dialogue reflected in the Beijing Women's Conference, students combatting attacks on affirmative action, gay and lesbian activists mobilizing against homophobic ballot initiatives, and Black youth

asking "where to now?" four years after the Los Angeles rebellion.

Likewise, the fact that "high-tech" capitalism takes the name "neoliberal restructuring" in the Third World has not lulled the masses into complacency. This is especially seen in the rise of new struggles by indigenous peoples in Latin America, largely inspired by the Chiapas revolt in Mexico. Since 1994 a new indigenous rights movement has emerged in Bolivia which unites Indians from the highlands and the Amazonian region; mass mobilizations of indigenous peoples have erupted this year throughout Ecuador; and an organization which for the first time embraces all the Mayan peoples of Guatemala has arisen.

Yet there is every reason to feel that pointing to new subjective struggles arising from today's material conditions still does not get us to the fundamental problem facing us. For even when new forms of revolt emerge, they confront such a void in the articulation of a concept of an alternative to existing society that their very forward movement risks being compromised. The pull to skip over the subjectivity of the idea of freedom is at the core of today's crisis in the radical movement.

The new indigenous movements in Latin America speak to this. At a time when most leftist parties in Latin America have accepted one or another form of "free market" restructuring as "inevitable," indigenous peoples are mobilizing against it on the grounds that it is destroying their communities. Yet the absence of any socialist alternative means that the struggles find themselves immediately confronting the question of whether they have any choice but to operate within the existing system. In Ecuador, it has led a section of the indigenous movement to fall victim to state cooptation. As one Ecuadoran activist in the U.S. said, "In this situation, the question of 'how to begin anew' is so pressing."

This is not just true of Latin America. Throughout the world the forward movement of the emerging revolts is being compromised by the lack of projection on the part of revolutionaries of a concept of a new society opposed to both existing capitalism and state-capitalism that called itself Communism.

For decades radicals resisted assuming responsibility for projecting a positive, humanist alternative to existing

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9. See "On the Battle of Ideas" (October 1982), in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of its World Development*, #7486.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

society. What is new today, however, is that whereas in earlier decades it was possible to harbor the illusion that forward movement can be achieved without assuming this responsibility, today's realities disclose that failure to project a comprehensive vision of what we are for leads to outright retrogression.

In East Europe and Russia the revolts face a reality in which "free market" and statist capitalism are posed as the only alternatives. This is providing the political space for the growth of an array of narrow nationalist tendencies—as seen most of all in the genocide against Bosnia. And in the U.S. the revolts face a reality in which an array of tendencies are promoting the notion of "self-reliance" within the existing structures of capitalism as the only alternative. The most threatening of these for today's freedom movements is Louis Farrakhan's effort to promote himself as a leading spokesperson for Black America in the aftermath of the Million Man March. Because of the void in the projection of a liberating alternative, each of the emerging revolts faces tremendous pressures to accommodate itself to the limits of the given.

To work out "how to begin anew" in light of this, despite our small numbers we must do what we can to assume responsibility for projecting a concept of liberation that points to a total uprooting of existing society.

That concept can be found in Marx's philosophy of "revolution in permanence." Its rediscovery for our age took nothing less than Raya Dunayevskaya's breakthrough on Hegel's Absolutes in 1953 and its subsequent three-decade development in the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism. In opposition to the way so many skipped over or narrowed Marx's concept of a total uprooting, Marxist-Humanism restated its meaning for the realities of our age.

Marxist-Humanists emphasized that far from simply critiquing capitalism for depriving workers of the full value of their labor, Marx centered his critique of capitalism on the very mode of labor—alienated labor. Nor did he stop here. He called the man/woman relation the "most fundamental" in society and the measure of whether it was truly free. In doing so he issued a total challenge, not just to capitalism's economics and politics, but also to its very culture. Marx projected a philosophy of revolution opposed to all conditions in which human relations take on the form of relations between things.

This flowed from Marx's demystification of Hegel's concept of absolute negativity. Instead of seeing the "negation of the negation" as the contradiction of philosophy with itself, Marx held that it expressed the "moving and creating" principle of history. Each facet of Marx's challenge to existing society flowed from his critical encounter with Hegel's Absolutes. As Dunayevskaya wrote in *Marxism and Freedom*, "the vision of the future [is what] Hegel called the Absolute and which Marx first called 'real Humanism' and later 'communism.' The road to both is by way of 'the negation of the negation'" (p.66).

This was not just true of the young Marx. It was true of the "mature" Marx of *Capital*. It reached its fullest expression in his last decade (1872-83). Far from being a mere search for the "origins" of class society, Marx's studies on East India, colonial Java, the American Indians and Australian aborigines in works like the *Ethnological Notebooks* was part of an effort to dig out, as Dunayevskaya noted, "how total, continuous, global must the concept of revolution be now."¹⁰

The projection of this philosophy of revolution in per-

10. Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (Champaign-Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), p. 187.

manence remains "the absolute challenge to our age." For history shows that without a philosophy of revolution, even the most creative movement from practice not only cannot meet its goal, but can fall prey to the pull of retrogression. Combatting this by projecting what Marx's Marxism means for today as restated by Marxist-Humanism defines our organizational role.

The fact that today's struggles confront the specter of retrogression does not mean the masses are backward. New forces constantly arise, and with them, the dialectic of negativity comes to life ever anew. But that does not mean mass revolts cannot be diverted from their aim if the role of an organization rooted in Marx's philosophy of revolution in permanence is left unconcretized.

B. The pull of the Practical Idea

Our effort to combat the tendency to skip over the subjects of revolt must not take the ground of what we oppose. For it would be the gravest error to try to combat the dismissal of mass subjectivity by acting as if Practice represents the transcendence of contradiction.

The pull to pose revolutionary Practice as sufficient to create a new society confronts us everywhere. It can be seen in those promoting some new version of a "party to lead"; in those who act as if mass discontent with the present state of affairs can by itself chart a course to a new beginning; and in those who do see the need for dialectics but who skip over or leave unconcretized the relation of organization and philosophy, thereby acting as if the unity of theory and practice simply comes by itself. Far from being true only of others, the tendency to act as if Practice is the resolution of contradiction remains the most basic problem facing Marxist-Humanists.

The objectivity of this tendency is directly spoken to in one of the most important philosophic developments in Marxist-Humanism—Raya Dunayevskaya's reexamination of Lenin's 1914 *Philosophic Notebooks* in 1986-87. Though it may seem accidental that working out our perspectives for 1996-97 coincides with the tenth anniversary of this new point of departure, today's situation discloses the need to view who we are and where we are going in light of this 1986-87 reexamination of Lenin.¹¹

Lenin was one who did see the need for revolutionary theory, and who did grasp the importance of Hegelian dialectics—so much so that he engaged in a profound study of Hegel's *Science of Logic* in 1914 and concretized its dialectic in analyzing the new objective stage of monopoly capitalism/imperialism and the new subjective force of national minorities resisting it.

Yet because Lenin became enamored of the Practical Idea as the key to forward movement when reaching the next-to-last chapter of the *Science of Logic*, the Idea of Cognition, he refrained from developing the dialectic of thought in its final chapter, the Absolute Idea. It isn't that Lenin was wrong to note the prominence Hegel gives to the Practical Idea. It's that he read this one-sidedly, by stressing Practice at the expense of the Idea of Theory. In doing so he failed to develop his own insight that "cognition not only reflects the objective world, but creates it." As a result, he never related the dialectic of absolute negativity to organization.

11. Dunayevskaya's 1986 reexamination of Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* is developed in the Introduction to the 1991 edition of *Philosophy and Revolution, from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989) entitled, "New Thoughts on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy."

TODAY'S CRISES AND THE SEARCH FOR A TOTAL UPROOTING

Lenin also overlooked Hegel's warning that unless Practice unites with Theory, the transition to the Absolute, or the new society, is not assured. Hegel even implies that retrogression will occur if that unity is not achieved. Yet Lenin remained unfazed by this warning of retrogression because he was so taken with the idea that Practice is the key to resolving contradiction. By failing to penetrate the dialectic of Hegel's Absolutes, he failed to fully prepare his and succeeding generations for grappling with "what happens after the revolution."

In light of the aborted and unfinished revolutions which we have witnessed in our time, Lenin's emphasis on the Practical Idea is clearly insufficient. Yet it was not only Lenin who became enamored of Practice as the resolution of contradiction. That was also true of the greatest Marxists after Lenin. The detailed discussion of Dunayevskaya's critique of Lenin contained in Kevin Anderson's *Lenin, Hegel and Western Marxism* provides new ground for exploring this.

This new work shows that even when such creative Marxist thinkers as Georg Lukacs delved into Hegelian dialectics, the concept of practice, of activity, predominated over the dialectic as a whole. He too refrained from delving into Hegel's Absolutes, stressing instead "The concrete superiority of the practical over the theoretical idea."¹²

Far from being a concern of some bygone era, the tendency to stop short of the dialectic of absolute negativity by stressing the priority of the Practical Idea has everything to do with the origin and persistence of today's retrogression.

One event which proved of crucial importance in the emergence of today's retrogression was the counter-revolution from within the revolution in Grenada in 1983. The main responsibility for the counter-revolution in Grenada—which gave Reagan the excuse he was looking for to invade—clearly lay with the Stalinists who took up arms against their own co-leaders. But the responsibility also lay with those who opposed Stalinism from the Left, such as the followers of C.L.R. James.

This is because those who followed James "evaded the task of philosophically restating Marxism for one's own age" by shifting that whole responsibility "to the shoulders of the proletariat, to 'practice.'" ¹³ By acting as if a revolutionary new beginning comes from practice, instead of through an energetic dialogue between the practice of the masses and a philosophy of liberation, they left the revolution unprepared to answer the question, "what happens after" the seizure of power.

It isn't that the events on tiny Grenada literally remade the map of the world. It's that the counter-revolution which emerged from within the revolution, and which opened the door to the U.S. imperialist invasion, showed that the revolutions of the post-World War II era had failed to work out a pathway to a new society. On a global scale, the banners of liberation under which an array of revolutions and freedom struggles were fought proved themselves wanting, because a relation between theory and practice that could realize the idea of freedom was left unconcretized. The failure to overcome the internal barriers to the self-development of revolution provided political space for capitalism to restructure and reorganize itself—and get away with it.

The key to the emergence of the retrogressive changed world of the 1980s was therefore not the objective changes in capitalism, as much as the contradictions within the revolutionary movements. The persistence of this stage of retrogression in the 1990s suggests that a revolutionary new beginning cannot arise unless a new relation of theory to practice that projects a liberating alternative to existing society is concretized.

For this reason, we cannot afford to harbor the illusion that the pull of the Practical Idea is no longer with us. In some respects it may seem strange that its pull persists, given the failure of so many revolutions. Yet the reason this remains such a problem is that even when dialectics was approached or dealt with in a serious way by radicals, philosophy remained unconcretized when it came to organization. A loophole was thereby left in the effort to project philosophy as an actual force of revolution. By failing to realize philosophy through a new relation between dialectics and organization, the movement has been left without historic proof that a philosophy of liberation can be a force for transforming society. For this reason, each time a new crisis point arises, radicals get pulled back to dependence on the Practical Idea as the only feasible alternative.

Far from being true only of others, this is the fundamental problem facing us. For as Dunayevskaya wrote in one of her very last writings, while Marxist-Humanism has worked out an historic body of ideas, we have not yet organizationally worked out philosophy as the absolute

(Continued on page 8)

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12. See Kevin Anderson's *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism* (Champaign-Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), pp. 177-84.

13. "Grenada: Counter-Revolution and Revolution," by Raya Dunayevskaya, in *Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought*, by Lou Turner and John Alan (Chicago: News and Letters, 1986), p. 91.

TODAY'S CRISES AND THE SEARCH FOR A TOTAL UPROOTING

(Continued from page 7)

opposite to the elitist "party to lead."¹⁴ Unless we do so, we will not just remain stuck at the threshold of the Absolute—we will be thrown far backward.

C. Absolute negativity and philosophic mediation

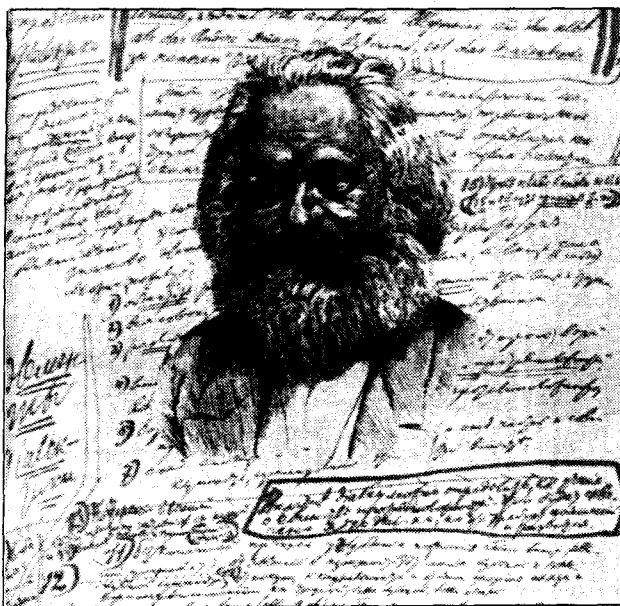
To meet the challenge of concretizing philosophy organizationally, we must come to grips with the positive which emerged from Dunayevskaya's 1986-87 critique of Lenin—her return to the "philosophic moment" of Marxist-Humanism, the 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes," this time seeing them as the "ground and roof" for working out the dialectics of organization and philosophy.

The 1953 letters did not only represent a return to Hegel's concept of absolute negativity. They also opened the door to achieving the link of continuity with Marx's Marxism by demystifying Hegel's concept of absolute negativity for today's freedom struggles. The importance of these letters for today flows from the need to assume

14. See "Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy" of June 1, 1987, *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1989), p. 15. This book also contains Dunayevskaya's 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes."

organizational responsibility for the projection of Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence" inseparable from the dialectic of philosophy.

A new publication issued by revolutionaries in India, containing six chapters from Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*, speaks to what this can mean. The editors say they issued this book because "an emancipatory vision as an alternative to the capitalist order and its barbarism is not emerging globally even six years after the state-capitalist dictatorships collapsed...it is therefore crucial to develop a total philosophy of revolution for total human liberation. Marx's philosophy of revolution is crucial to the working out of this total philosophy and therefore it is necessary to rediscover Marx's Marxism for our age."¹⁵



Lithograph of Marx superimposed on page of manuscript from Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* on Hegel's *Science of Logic* on which he gives his 16 point summary of the dialectic.

They especially emphasize how Marx singled out not alone the class struggle but also the need for new man/woman relations. This is crucial because, as they note, no revolutionary subject can truly be free "unless it has first eliminated all relations of domination and subordination within its own ranks." We must add, however, that Marx did not only extend his critique of the mode of production to a critique of the family, alienated man/woman relations, racism, and national oppression. He also dug into Hegel's dialectic "in and for itself," in his 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic." Marx there projected a New Humanism "which distinguishes itself from idealism and materialism, and is, at the same time, the truth uniting them both." By holding firmly to the Hegelian dialectic, Marx projected a concept of revolution centering on the need for a total uprooting.

Thus, while Marx's thought was deeply rooted in subjects of revolution, Marx's Marxism is a totality that does not stop at a mere summation of its parts. By being firmly rooted in Hegel's dialectic, he projected a vision of a total uprooting which each of these forces desperately needs in order to meet the task of transforming reality.

This is what post-Marx Marxists failed to live up to. It isn't that they didn't know Marx had a concept of "revolution in permanence." It's that because they separated that concept from Hegel's dialectic of absolute negativity, they proved unable to re-create his concept of a total uprooting. The entire history of Marxism shows that it is impossible to restate the fullness of Marx's challenge to existing society unless we become deeply rooted in the Hegelian dialectic.

Internalizing and projecting Marxist-Humanism's unique contributions on the Hegelian dialectic as exhibited in his *Phenomenology of Mind*, *Science of Logic*, and *Philosophy of Mind* is of foremost organizational importance. What Hegel called the "eternal Idea" in paragraph 577 of his *Philosophy of Mind*, and what Marxist-Humanists call Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence," is nothing less than the mediating determination in the dialectics of organization and philosophy.

15. See "Dialogue from India: On the Dialectics of Women's Liberation," *News & Letters*, May 1996.

III. Philosophic-political-organizational tasks for 1996-97

This defines the importance of our foremost tasks, from which all our others must flow—our work in creating and projecting a new book containing some of Raya Dunayevskaya's major writings on the Hegelian dialectic.

The writings being considered for this book range from the 1949-50 philosophic correspondence during the Miners' General Strike, to commentaries on Hegel's major works, to analyses of such thinkers as Fanon, Lukacs, Korsch, Adorno and Kosik. It will also include two especially critical determinants: 1) The text of the "philosophic moment" of Marxist-Humanism—the 1953 Letters on Hegel's Absolutes; and 2) A series of 1980's writings which explore the meaning of Marxist-Humanism.

By including these writings this new work will test us on our ability to project Marxist-Humanism on the basis of the founder's philosophic self-comprehension of her body of thought. Far from such reflection upon the meaning of Marxist-Humanism leading to some "closed ontology," the act of thought concentrating itself upon itself provides the direction for working out what Marxist-Humanism means for the future. Our effort to have our work on this book become an organizational endeavor

or will test our determination to break down the division between philosophy and organization.

This is what must permeate all our other tasks, beginning with the development of a Marxist-Humanist Statement on the Black Dimension. Its importance is borne out by the need to comprehend how the changes in U.S. economics, politics and ideology over the last two decades have impacted Black America. We aim to present the Black Dimension not as a passive object of these changes, but rather to discern the new forms of revolt being engendered in the shell of the old. This has always defined our approach, as seen with *American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard*.

At the same time, our Statement aims to directly speak to the crisis in thought confronting Black America. Precisely because the Black Dimension represents such an important force in the transformation of U.S. society, our work on this statement calls for no separation between economics, politics, and philosophy.

The need for this integrality also underlines our newest publication—the expanded edition of *Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western "Civilization."* In projecting the meaning of the new subjective force of liberation contained in Bosnia's struggle for multiethnicity

and generalizing the lessons of Bosnia for freedom struggles elsewhere, especially in the U.S., this book shows how we tried to meet the challenge of becoming continuators of Marxist-Humanism by posing politicalization inseparable from philosophy. It is a central part of our pre-convention discussion.

A key expression of our determination to go "lower and deeper" into the revolutionary layers of U.S. society is our work with prisoners, which reached a new level of intensity this year. We are aiding in the creation of a new pamphlet, written by prisoners, which will expose the true nature of the conditions facing them.

We will also soon have in hand a new edition of *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*. In focusing on how Marxist-Humanism developed the dialectics of revolution for the specific realities facing women's liberation, it illuminates the methodology of relating dialectical philosophy to all forces of revolt. The new edition also underlines the importance of the Archives of Marxist-Humanism. Our work in preserving, collecting, and donating those writings not yet deposited at Wayne State University remains the most critical test of whether we are on the road to becoming continuators.

We have also reached a critical moment in the development of *News & Letters* newspaper. Over the past year we have developed new analyses of objective events as well as eliciting new voices from below, both of which will need further development over the course of 1996-97. We will need to pay special attention to how our newspaper will take up direct discussions on philosophy, the battle of ideas, and the "dialectic proper," in the spirit of the discussion of a new kind of paper that truly becomes a philosophic and organizational as well as political organ.

This integrality underlines the importance of organizational growth. We reached a new stage in this over the past year, with the development of a new local of *News and Letters* Committees in Memphis and Mississippi. The work to establish this local has brought us into contact with a new generation of Black worker-activists hungering for a way to work out a new beginning that would not be rolled back. They sensed in our organization the projection of ideas that could aid their self-development as thinkers and activists. This reflects the extent to which our organization can be a catalyst and propellant in working out new beginnings when we successfully internalize, concretize, and project the Marxist-Humanist body of ideas.

Internationalism has always been key for us. The availability of all of Marxist-Humanism's major works in Mexico; the new Slovakian edition of *Philosophy and Revolution*; the forthcoming German edition of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*; and the translations underway of Dunayevskaya's major works into Chinese all testify to the need to deepen our international relations, including with in-person trips.

The hardest test of all is for organizational growth to reach to the level of the Marxist-Humanist concept of organization. The unity of philosophy and organization is not the easiest thing to work out, given the division of mental from manual which so defines every facet of society. Yet achieving this is the only way to engage in the kind of philosophic-political-organizational labor that can make an historic contribution to the task of transforming reality.

—The Resident Editorial Board

"Challenging, passionate, witty and deeply learned, Dunayevskaya's voice speaks in this new edition to a whole new generation. It was never more needed."

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—GLORIA I. JOSEPH, author of *Common Differences*

Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution

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THE ISRAELI ELECTION

The razor-thin election victory of Mr. Netanyahu overnight turned a basically secular country into a potentially fundamentalist nightmare. By handing over the direction and control of Israeli politics to the most reactionary elements in that land, the Israeli vote has not only endangered peace with the Palestinians and other Arabs, but has given an impetus to rekindling acts of terror against Jews, worldwide. It was a suicidal act.

Alarmed
Canada

In the second year of the intifada, Netanyahu spoke publicly about advising the Cabinet to take advantage of the world's focus on Tiananmen Square to expel all Arabs from Eretz Shalom. He told a university audience that Shamir's ministers rejected his idea but he still advocated it. The mainstream press ignored it, but it was a formula for genocide. Even Pat Buchanan never came out for rounding up every Mexican at gunpoint and herding them over the border. Why isn't Netanyahu's fascist mind-set fair copy for the mainstream press? Even Thomas Friedman, who called the election a "disaster" and a victory for the assassin Yigal Amir, is careful not to rake too much muck about "our strategic ally, the only democracy in the Middle East"—actually a segregationist state posing as a democracy which the U.S. is financing to the tune of millions of dollars.

Ibn Fareed
California

I know that the recent Israeli election is nowhere as grim as the counter-revolution in Germany in 1918-19. But what came to my mind as I heard the election results and saw the religious extremists dancing in the streets was what Raya Dunayevskaya quoted from Rosa Luxemburg then, about those who thought their ascendancy would bring "order" to Germany: "You stupid lackeys! Your 'order' is built on sand. Tomorrow the revolution will rear its head once again and, to your horror, will proclaim, with trumpets blazing: I was, I am, I will be!"

Revolutionary feminist
Memphis

ZAPATISTAS' INTERCONTINENTAL CAMPAIGN



In January the Zapatistas proposed an intercontinental campaign against "neoliberalism" with a summit to be held in Chiapas between July 27 and August 3. Continental meetings to prepare for it were proposed for America in La Realidad, for Oceania in Sydney, for Asia in Tokyo, and for Europe in Berlin. One took place in Berlin over Easter, and a second from May 30 to June 2, where 1,000 people took part. The only other meeting I know took place was that in La Realidad in April.

There, subcommandante Marcos — following the theme that "it is not necessary to conquer the world, it is enough to create it anew" — said: "We have to overcome the lament and develop new ideas and ways...We have to provide space for memory, for history, the mirror that reminds us what we were, shows what we are today, and promises what we can become...The mighty powers of the world have not yet developed arms to destroy our dreams, so we will continue to dream. Do not idealize us. We are not the new humans. Zapatismo is not the new world. It is an attempt, an organization, a decision to fight to change everything including ourselves."

European correspondent
Prague

WHAT IS REVOLUTION?

The word revolution comes from the word revolt. It's a sudden change and rebellion against the full circle. What is the full circle? The seven G's? Corporate America? Those in power of the world banks who can hire gunmen to handle their affairs? Those in Washington—the president, Congress and the Penta-

Readers' Views

THE PRACTICE OF PHILOSOPHY AND TODAY'S STRUGGLES

Reading Dunayevskaya's Archives column in the June issue of News & Letters reminded me of a Mayan legend about creation that says to be human is to show a truthful reflection of ourselves. My understanding of Hegel's "negation of the negation" is that it brings about change of the inner self, and questions power relations in themselves. It is not about just wanting to be in control. Dunayevskaya tried to practice new relations by practicing the committee form of organization with the aim of getting to second negation. For these ideas to develop we have to move away from egotism and attempt a deeper change. Machismo is very strong in Latin America and must be confronted.

Peter Hudis' review of Meszaros' *Beyond Capital* also points out that we can get beyond capital to new relations only through the negation of the negation.

Mexican revolutionary
Los Angeles

Peter Hudis' essay on *Beyond Capital* implies that even those who do see the need for philosophy can fall into the trap of putting social analysis before the creativity of cognition. They take philosophy for granted as if it doesn't need to be recreated, or as if working it out can be put off until after the "concrete" is dealt with.

Franklin Dmitryev
Memphis

That Meszaros sounds so close to much of what Marxist-Humanists say makes his mistakes very sobering. Peter Hudis' essay shows how easy it was for him—despite all that "affinity" and despite all Meszaros' thoroughness—to go off the tracks and turn away from Marx and Hegel "in order to secure a 'firmer material base.'" It shows how important it is for our own footing to be sound and for us to make sure we "start from the Absolute."

Women's liberationist
Tennessee

gon—who have all the armed forces at their disposal? Or is it a combined effort of all of them? In simple terms a revolution is an uprising of the people who have been oppressed by their government, who have been overtaxed, unemployed and consistently thrown in prison for frivolous crimes. A revolution serves one useful purpose: to get back civil rights and humane treatment that somehow got lost in the shuffle of conservative idealism of only a few wealthy people.

Prisoner
Oklahoma

The Republicans are smart enough to figure out that a revolution is required to really affect change in any way. There's no way I can win my battle with any real depth without fighting your battle, too. I just don't understand how anyone can be "single-interest" or (my least favorite term) "special interest." It's all too tightly woven to pull out one thread and consider the job done.

Young feminist
Chicago

REMEMBERING EAST TIMOR

July 17 marks the 20th anniversary of President Suharto of Indonesia's signing of a document called the Bill of Integration—a legislative effort to deny the people of East Timor the right to national self-determination by unilaterally declaring it Indonesia's 27th province. This piece of paper is central to the Indonesian government's "integrasi" campaign—that is, the two-decade-long fiction that the East Timorese people are backward and yearn to be part of Indonesia for their own betterment. But the more than a quarter of a million East Timorese lives lost since the 1975 Indonesian invasion attest to the fact that an idea of freedom is alive in the towns and countryside of the eastern half of the island and that the resistance to oppression will continue as long as necessary.

Young activist
Chicago

I've recently begun to read News & Letters again. I moved away from anyone in the Left for a long time, because I became very disgusted after the negotiations between the guerrillas and the government in El Salvador. But I'm feeling the need to be in touch again, and think things through. One cannot be alone. I want to both learn, and contribute some of my thinking. Philosophy is very hard for me, but little by little I am trying to understand.

Central American revolutionary
California

Maya Jhansi's column on child labor, called "The maturity of our age," (June N&L) showed the relationship between philosophy and youth's everyday struggles. I particularly liked the way she interpreted the 13-year-old Canadian youth's statement: "One of the best things about being young is that we still have our imagination. We still think we can fly." In contrasting that kind of humanism and idealism to the phony humanitarianism of politicians the world over, she reminded me of the way the Constitution of News and Letters Revolutionary force, as "the ones whose idealism combines with opposition to existing adult society in so unique a way that it literally brings them alongside of the workers as builders of the new society."

Revolutionary
Chicago

I only learned of Shainape Shcapwe, the Marxist-Humanist Native American columnist, in the In Memoriam to her in the June N&L. I liked very much the quote from her 1985 article, where she debated with Ward Churchill on his interpretation of Marxism. It seems she was trying to jam together the Native American struggles with a philosophical revolutionary approach.

Youth
Los Angeles

FUNDRAISER VS. BRUTALITY

The annual "Steppers Fund-Raising Affair" will be held on Saturday, Aug. 31, at Kennedy-King College, from 9 PM to 1 AM. The sponsors support the victims of police brutality and their families, and are working with others to fight against the violations of civil and human rights. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door for an evening of music, dancing, refreshments and old fashioned fun. For more information call 312/298-0055.

Steppers supporter
Chicago



NEW EDITIONS OF RAYA'S TRILOGY

Kevin Anderson's report from Europe was one of

the more inspiring writings about that part of the world in a long time. Yet he states "in 1997 or 1998 Argument Verlag is planning to publish a German edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, the first new translation of Dunayevskaya's writings to appear in Europe since 1981." Tsk, tsk. What about the Russian and now the Slovak translations of *Philosophy and Revolution*? Please let all readers know that these works are now available in Europe!

Reader
California

BREAKING DOWN ALIENATION?

Cedrick Gardner's "No Longer Management and Proud of It," in the June issue of News & Letters shows that when someone sees his problems reflected in the paper it breaks down the alienation under capitalism. A lot of times we

are told there is something wrong with us rather than with capitalism.

Gene Ford
Los Angeles

"Workshop Talks" has been opening up a discussion on the new concept which is the rage everywhere. I liked the distinction made in the June issue between a worker's natural tendency to humanism vs. the humanitarianism of the bourgeoisie. Yet even if workers had full control of production I'm not certain it would be such a flowering in light of the racism and exclusionism on the job today vs. Mexicans, Blacks, etc. The whole point of "team" and why some workers jump for it is that workers really want to participate and have some kind of mental engagement. But they're trying to socialize everyone on the basis of the corporate need and not "everyone according to his need."

Clerical worker
Oakland, Cal.

The reaction to high gas prices revealed contradictory attitudes to energy consumption here. Many Oklahomans actually welcome higher crude oil prices since it allows marginally-producing wells to continue. Unemployment among experienced oil-field workers is high in this area. At the same time, the vehicle registration fee system subsidizes older, gas-guzzler vehicles by taxing newer, more fuel-efficient, less-polluting vehicles more. Unfortunately, there is still the practical difficulty many people face in being able to afford gas for their cars, regardless of any level of Federal or State gas tax.

Reporter
Oklahoma

FOUNDING CONVENTION

The platform that the bureaucrats presented at the founding convention of the Labor Party is really only 25% better than the same old platform that the AFL-CIO leadership has been trotting out for the last 30 years.

Worker delegate
Cleveland, Ohio

By refusing to take any position on abortion rights the Labor Party is trying to appeal to sexist men. It is forgetting about women, who are more than half the work force. To stop the pro-choice amendment to the party's platform the leadership of the endorsing unions started a rumor that all the Mexican farm workers would walk out of the convention if the amendment passed. But I went up and spoke to the women in FLOC, and they said that was completely false.

Socialist feminist
Seattle, Wash.

At the Labor Party's founding convention the only thing that impressed me about Don Wages, the president of OCAW, was his ability to dominate a microphone for hours at a time.

He promised to "fight all the way to hell and back" to defend the first amendment rights of those of us selling radical newspapers—as long as we were anywhere except at his convention. Despite his eloquence, he failed to chase us out of the corridor that led up to the convention hall.

Jim Guthrie
Chicago

WHY HELP N&L TO CONTINUE?

I have enclosed a contribution in the hope that you will be able to continue on. Your paper is very helpful to me because there is so much confusion about what Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg, Trotsky, DeLeon, Dunayevskaya and others have really written. The confusion comes from lack of basic information and deliberate disformation by the ruling patriarchs who are threatened by revolutionary ideas. Some of the Left have given up, but I feel I am just beginning to understand.

Retired worker
Wisconsin

Readers—Have you sent your contribution to help N&L stay in the fight?

Black/Red View

by John Alan

Violence, so much a part of American history and particularly of southern history, has been an important factor in maintaining the two worlds of race.

—John Hope Franklin, 1989

Arsonists torched more than 30 African-American churches in the South this year. The fires of these burning churches not only gave a terrifying illumination to the nights of the rural South, they also lit up the politics of race in this country. President Clinton, in an attempt to counter the charge that he was doing nothing to stop the arsons, went to South Carolina and stationed himself close to the charred ruins of a Black church to call for sanity and racial tolerance.

Clinton, in all of his public statements regarding the torching of Black churches, carefully avoids the use of the word racism while reiterating over and over that there is no evidence of a conspiracy. At the White House conference of Southern governors he offered a "copy-cat" theory for the burnings.

Robert Dole, reflecting the racist views of his Southern conservative supporters, called Clinton's concern with the torching of Black churches a bowing to the pressure of the southern Black ministry. Ralph Reed, the ultra-conservative leader of the Christian Coalition, spoke out against the burnings on NBC's "Meet the Press." He admitted that most evangelical Christians were on the wrong side of the racial issue, "the most central struggle for social justice in this century."

All of these people, though they were politically compelled to respond, want to avoid the fact that America was born in racism and is still a racist society.

Clinton's "copy-cat" theory would have validity if he dared to show that these fires were motivated by years of racist politics attacking Black unwed mothers as bankrupting the nation and affirmative action as a program that gave jobs to "unqualified" Blacks. It is this kind of racist politics which gives "copy cats" their needed security to burn Black churches in the night.

African Americans can relate current church burnings to the lynchings and burnings in the South not too long ago. At that time, the lynchers were certain that the national government would do little to stop them because they knew it agreed with their racist ideology, even if it didn't condone the lynchings.

Ralph Reed's intervention has all the earmarks of a politician pouncing on an event to use it for his own ends. Like Rev. Joseph Lowery, one should be wary of a reactionary who comes with gifts and confessing the sins of his followers. In any case, it is doubtful that Reed has changed his conservative position on abortion and other right-wing issues. Thus, if Reed is true to his political position, is he attempting to find unity with the conservative trends in the Black churches, such as those elements that are opposed to abortions?

Of course the Black churches have elements of conservatism. But racism, unemployment, poverty and social dislocation have traditionally made the churches a voice of the Black underclass and, at times, a militant expression of the Black struggle for freedom. It is easy to see that it is this social role that makes them a target for racist arsonists.

President Clinton has expressed his outrage but will

Racist church burnings

he do much to track down those who are responsible without continuous pressure from the Black community and people who want a nonracist society? This question is asked within the context of the present sharp political and judicial swing to the right in this country.

At no time since the days of post-Reconstruction have African Americans experienced such a judicial and legislative annulment of protections that would assure them equal representation in Congress and equal opportunities for jobs and higher education. Clinton has shown that he bends with every movement from the right. And as far as the right wing is concerned, torching Black churches is only worth mentioning to make political hay.

Cabrini-Green protest



Chicago—Over 100 residents of the Cabrini-Green housing project rallied at City Hall on July 1 to protest the city's latest plan to "privatize" the project in order to clear the area for high-income residents.

The Daley administration has been trying for years to dismantle parts of Cabrini, one of the most notorious of Chicago's segregated public housing projects. Though such proposals are usually dressed up in rhetoric about its high-crime rate, the real reason for them is that it lies adjacent to what has become a prime real estate area.

Under the latest plan, five high-rises will be torn down, land owned by the Board of Education in the surrounding area will be sold off to private developers, and several new low-rise buildings will be constructed. What angers many residents is that only a small percentage of these units will be set aside for low-income residents.

The City's stake in all this is obvious. Some estimate that the city could gain up to \$1 billion through the sale of land adjacent to Cabrini if the "privatization" of sections of the project leads to an influx of upper-income residents. "I'm not against them tearing down some of these rat-holes so they can build new apartments for us," one Black man commented. "I just don't think it's right to tear them down for the sake of replacing us with rich folk who can live anywhere they want."

"This is right of out Bosnia," one resident said. "The only difference is that they have a name for it there—ethnic cleansing. Here, they want to push poor Black folk out of the way without even giving it a name."

—Peter Wermuth

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

We made some important strides in transforming the plantation conditions of Black Life and labor, and we elected some Black political officials. The problem is that except for a very small group of people, no one was thinking about making freedom real, compared to this idea of absolute negativity that Raya says Black struggle and thought is so deeply rooted in.

A very important aspect of absolute negativity is that because it is all about the method by which human beings transform reality, either in the exploitative way that capitalism has them do, or in the revolutionary way that they spontaneously do when fighting for freedom from under capitalist domination, absolute negativity allows us to see the future in the present. So once the struggle to make freedom real is not compared to this idea of absolute negativity, we are deprived of a vision of the future. This kind of deprivation is as bad as being deprived of decent food, shelter and a job.

Naturally, this is not to say that nothing has been accomplished, or that no progress has been made. On the contrary, that is the one thing we have going for us, and also what requires so much work to uncover and to recognize. As you know, this is a great deal of the work that is presently going into the writing of what we are calling for now, "The Marxist-Humanist Statement on the Black Dimension."

This brings up another important aspect of absolute negativity. Every immediate situation or question that comes up, whether on the job or in the political and social world, has a past. That is what Hegel means when he says that every immediate thing in what we take to be the status quo is not so immediate or simple as it seems, but has undergone what he calls mediation.

By mediation Hegel doesn't exactly mean what happens when workers' disputes with management are "mediated." There, the outcome is more often than not a result that submerges or covers up the real conflicts and antagonisms between workers and management. The

Absolute negativity

immediate result that workers are left with is either: we won a little something, or we lost something (often it's more than workers can afford to lose). The immediate results or facts therefore hide the conflict and the struggle between the two opposing sides. That is also why each immediate fact, situation, or issue we have to deal with must not be taken at face value. A human struggle of some kind has gone on behind every immediate situation that we think we are seeing for the first time.

Understanding this question of mediation is also what Hegel calls our first or immediate negation of the immediate situation or problem we face. Because you already know that absolute negativity involves a double negation, a negation of the negation, you can see right away that we have to find out what's involved in getting beyond this first negation to the second negation.

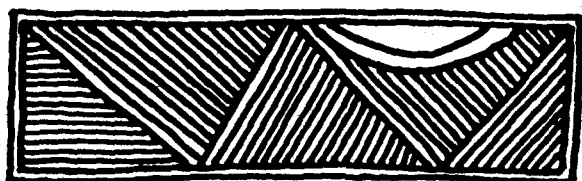
(Continued next issue)

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George Jackson today

Los Angeles—This Aug. 21 will be 25 years since the murder of George L. Jackson at San Quentin Prison, during what the prison administration characterized as an escape attempt. At that time Jackson was on trial along with Fleeta Drumgo and John Cluchette, two other prisoners, for the murder of a prison guard.

Jackson was facing the death penalty if convicted, since he was already serving one year to life for a \$70 robbery. At the time of Jackson's death he had already done 11 years, 8½ years in solitary confinement for that particular crime, but throughout Jackson's life, he had spent a large portion of his 29 years behind prison walls, from a juvenile offender on up. In a certain sense, George Jackson grew up in the system, as was stated by a Chicano convict friend, L. Talamantez, who went through that same system with Jackson: "George Jackson had a very bad reputation with the administration as being a Black thug, pressuring other prisoners and stuff. You could say San Quentin made gangsters out of all of us."

Jackson had over a period of time become a legend within the California prison system, of being a powerful and feared individual within the underworld where everything that goes on within the streets goes on behind prison walls, from drugs to murder and prostitution.

When the turning point in Jackson's thinking took place, I cannot be sure. But I think the source for that break can be found in the letters for family and friends that conveyed his feelings of hate for the system so powerfully; these can be read within his two books, *Soledad Brother* and *Blood in My Eye*. These two books still have powerful messages for the youth today.

Jackson knew that he needed a weapon to fight the administration with. Organization was one source of power in the joint. Many groups began to spring up, separate groups of Black, Brown, and white, who began political education classes to cement a philosophy of political action.

"I was angry. I was in prison and I looked around for something that would really bother these cats. Well, I couldn't find anything that bothered them more than a philosophy. I gave everyone a chance. I gave Adam Smith as much attention as I gave Karl Marx. But Smith's whole point was to justify the bourgeoisie and because that was his aim, his conclusions were strained. The things I read in Marx made more sense" (quoted in *The Rise and Fall of California's Radical Prison Movement* by Eric Cummins, p. 157).

So the need for philosophy was important as a weapon, as a powerful physical force in the process of organizing and transforming the "Black criminal mentality into a Black revolutionary mentality," which was demanded in order to fight the system.

The fighting spirit of George Jackson still haunts the California prison system today, where the laws, like "Three strikes and you're out," have increased sentences, to 25 years to life. The prison system is busting at overflow. The anger is reflected in internal gang wars among Black, Brown and white, while the true enemy is within the system of capitalism itself, and the rich go free and the poor are incarcerated in the ghettos and prisons.

The reality of any newfound Black movement within this country cannot ignore or forget the massive imprisonment of our youth. We face a culture of imprisonment. As Jackson recognized, the Black criminal mentality must be transformed into a revolutionary mentality, and to reach that we need a philosophy of revolution against the bourgeois mentality that even plagues the poor who feed upon each other.

—Gene Ford

'Queer by Choice'

(Continued from page 2)

pressures are especially intense for women because of economic concerns. Whisman draws out the radical humanism in lesbian accounts of making the "right choice."

One lesbian says she "chose to be happy... Life [with a man] would have been mediocre. I could've made it work if I'd wanted to. But I would've never been able to feel free. To fly, in life." Many women find a form of freedom in choosing a lesbian sexuality. Another woman speaks of how being heterosexual is not a choice in a society which forces boys and girls into gender roles upon birth. "I think it would be nice if change could be made so that all people could be fully human and heterosexuality could be a choice."

Queer theory which rests on deterministic assumptions necessarily regards the current state of anti-human separation and degraded relations between men and women as "natural." It misses the enormous wealth of possibilities in store for humanity if we take responsibility to work at overcoming all alienating divisions.

For many women, choosing to be lesbian is to resist the patriarchal insistence that female sexuality be defined by male desire. But conceptions of choice are not only radicalizing for women. One gay man told the author, "I tend to think the choice is all important, freedom of choice... I sort of believe in this possibility of infinite instantaneous liberation from any kind of past, in a moment of absolute choice."

As feminists and queers striving to understand our roles in the transformation of society on new human grounds, debate and dialogue on questions of choice and sexuality is paramount.

—Julia Jones

We invite readers to continue the dialogue on revolutionary feminist queer philosophy through writing for *News & Letters* or informal bulletins put out by the Bay Area Local. See addresses, p. 4.

Youth

by Kevin Michaels

I became a committed revolutionary in the summer of 1992. I was living in New Orleans at the time and, after half a dozen years of desultory activism, I decided that the class and racial divisions of American society could only be overcome by an organized challenge. I met a member of the International Socialist Organization (ISO) on a picket line with striking grocery workers and was attracted by his paper's characterization of Stalin's Russia as a state-capitalist society which had nothing to do with socialism. I joined the ISO shortly thereafter and began two years of fairly intense political activity.

I relished the energy and commitment of the people I met, but early on began to chafe at the manner in which the ISO's participation in the struggles of working people was conducted. We acted as if we always had the answers and, since we were "building the socialist alternative," we weren't interested in what the human beings confronting capitalist society had to teach us.

My experience took place in small branches of the ISO, with few other leftists to challenge us. Occasionally, I would hear stories that the ISO's conduct of meetings in larger cities was less than democratic and included the physical barring of other political groups from public meetings. I shrugged them off; half not believing what I heard, half blaming it on the sectarianism of other groups.

But my growing distaste with the elitism of the party-to-lead form of organization and the stale journalistic treatment of the human activity of revolt in the ISO's paper convinced me to seek out a new relationship between thought and activity, a relationship that I discovered was being developed by News and Letters Committees. My witnessing of a public ISO meeting in Chicago



An open letter to the ISO youth

in which the floor discussion was handled so undemocratically that two News and Letters members in attendance had to verbally challenge the chairperson to be permitted to speak hastened my departure. I had come to realize that, even if you call Stalin's Russia state-capitalism, you still have nowhere to begin anew unless you return to Marx's Marxism.

Once I left I felt a freedom to actually begin the difficult activity of thought necessary to develop towards the new type of revolutionary that our retrogressive era demands that we become. My membership in News and Letters Committees is now part of that activity.

The advertisement last month of the ISO's "Socialist Summer School" in Chicago seemed to me an opportunity to challenge the truncated Marxism that permeates my former organization. I hoped to take the floor in a public meeting announced in a local arts and entertainment paper at which Chris Harman, a leader of the ISO's parent organization in Britain, would be speaking.

Two fellow News and Letters members and I went to the University of Illinois at Chicago campus to distribute our paper and attend the evening meeting. We were met with hostile glances outside the building in which Harman's talk was to be held. Things became more serious once we entered.

We were met at the foot of the escalator leading up to the auditorium by a group of a dozen ISO members who physically blocked us from advancing. We were told that we would have to put our papers away or we could not enter the meeting. The demeanor of the people facing us reminded me of parking lot fist-fights after high school basketball games in my home town.

When we told them that we refused to comply with their restrictions at a publicly announced meeting and insisted upon our right to take part in a civil manner, more people joined the security squad and crackling

walkie-talkies began appearing. One of the ISO members informed us that the right to free speech did not apply here and that the evening's meeting was solely an occasion to build his organization.

After about 30 minutes of this type of confrontation, six police officers appeared, dressed in bulletproof vests and combat boots for the possibility of a Bulls win in the final championship game that night. The ISO had actually done what I had heard rumors of years before. They had called upon the special bodies of armed men of the bourgeois state to prevent other revolutionaries from attending their meeting. We were escorted off campus by the police.

What does this incident reveal about the ISO, about its attitude toward the power of ideas and its attitude towards its own members and contacts? It shows that they fear being challenged by thought's power to shape the world. It shows that they actually fear that their members will be influenced by a body of ideas which makes no separation between theory and activity and will go to any means to prevent them from hearing those ideas. Most of all, it shows the bankruptcy of separating what you are for from the way you conduct your revolutionary activity. If the ISO will rely on the bourgeois state to help police the minds of its members, what kind of future for humanity can they hope to project?

I hope that the members and contacts of the ISO who witnessed this event will realize that there can no longer be a separation between theory and practice. The retrogression which this incident typifies must be of the utmost concern for all those who struggle against capitalism's barbarism. I urge all those around the ISO who truly want to project an idea of freedom which can overcome our anti-human society to join News and Letters in the work of developing a new relationship between activity, thought and the human subjects of revolt.

As Others See Us

Notes on the Practical Idea and the Russian Revolution

by Sam Friedman

*Every act of becoming conscious
(it says here in this book)
is an unnatural act.*

—Adrienne Rich, *Diving into the Wreck*

Kevin Anderson's *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism* focuses on an analysis of Lenin's reading of Hegel after the beginning of World War I; the uses he made of his insights into Hegel; and the ways Lenin's reading of Hegel did and did not influence Western Marxism. Here, I want to pick up on a few of my disagreements with Anderson's argument and to see where they lead in terms of political implications.

Let me start by saying that Anderson's book is terrific. Unlike many analyses of Hegel and Marxism, it is comprehensible. Beyond that, it lays out an analysis that is coherent, sensible, and useful. Furthermore, even where it seems to me to be wrong, its clarity and strength make it possible to see how an understanding of these mistakes or omissions can be corrected and the political implications of this.

One of the major mistakes Anderson makes is one where he has good company, including both Lenin and Raya Dunayevskaya. Anderson sees Lenin as having been led by his reading of Hegel to an analysis of imperialism that sees the working class as containing a workers' aristocracy that is the root of reformism. As capitalism moves into its monopoly phase, new forms of subjectivity, including both nationalist movements and the socialism of the lower sections of the working class, become the new opposition and, in the Russian Empire at least, the new and successful revolutionary subject. Anderson, following Dunayevskaya, sees this as a brilliant example of how Marxists who understand Hegel can analyze the dialectics of capitalism and act to end this hideous system.

Unfortunately for their arguments, Lenin, Dunayevskaya, and Anderson are historically wrong about the theory of the labor aristocracy. In brief, the movements throughout Europe (and the United States) at the end of World War I involved both the "labor aristocracy" and workers from lower strata, and if anything it was the "aristocratic" workers who led in the formation of soviets in Russia, the radicalization of Glasgow, Berlin, Paris, and Turin; the railroad and building trades radicalization in France; and the Seattle general strike. Furthermore, near-revolutionary episodes in France (1968), Italy (1969-70), Portugal (1975), Hungary (1956), Poland (early 1980s) and the workers' movements in Argentina, Brazil and Chile, have all also followed the pattern of having "aristocrats" as an important, in some cases primary, part of the radicalization.

One question that we need to consider, then, is what are the political and philosophical implications if Anderson, Dunayevskaya, and Lenin were wrong on this issue. Does it mean that the entire analysis of imperialism was wrong? That Lenin's analysis of imperialism (still one of the best theoretical refutations of those who oppose affirmative action and other programs against racism) was wrong? That the dialectical analyses coming out of their reading of Hegel were wrong? I suggest, instead, that their error was in not taking the implications of Hegel far enough—that is, that they retreated to a "vulgar materialist" analysis in seeing the contradictions within the working class as primarily based on eco-

nomic divisions among workers rather than being subjective (i.e., political). Lenin, to his credit, nonetheless acted in practice in full recognition of the primary of the political divisions among workers, and this enabled him to develop the politics of 1917.

Perhaps the core of my argument here flows from asking myself "What was Lenin thinking about when he wrote about the Practical Idea?" Lenin writes, "What is necessary is the union of cognition and practice," and Anderson (p. 81) goes on to note that Lenin's thought here involves "the development of self-conscious subjectivity aware of its own actuality." Anderson then notes (p. 82) that Lenin omits to write down some of Hegel's key ideas, including "But what is still lacking in the practical Idea is the moment of consciousness proper itself, namely, that the moment of actuality in the Notion should have attained on its own account the determination of external being. Another way of regarding this defect is that the practical Idea still lacks the moment of the theoretical Idea." There is somewhat of an insufficiency in Anderson's discussion of this point, however. He does not seriously discuss who or what it is that Lenin sees as being subjective. Is it the working class as a whole? The working class as a divided, dialectical process? The party?

I suggest that, for Lenin, the Practical Idea meant the party—the party, it is true, in dialectic with the working class, and the party as a dialectically-changing formation, but nevertheless the party. Here, Anderson and Dunayevskaya would then probably say that the problem is for the working class to "get philosophy"—that is, that it "lacks the moment of the theoretical Idea." Furthermore, they would correctly emphasize that "getting philosophy" requires philosophical knowledge, creativity, discussion, and hard work on the part of organized revolutionaries. My analysis of Lenin, however, is that he focused on the need for a party, and for that party to have the politics it needed, for his whole life (while, as Dunayevskaya and Anderson have pointed out, downplaying the role of philosophical knowledge and discussion in the party and the class).

Sam Farber's *Beyond Stalinism* (1990) offers some useful insight here. His book showed that Lenin's party lacked a theoretical notion of socialism. History since then has indeed taught us many lessons about the essence of socialism as being workers' democracy. The Bolsheviks lacked this understanding; and Farber shows in great detail how this lack led them astray time after time. Carrying the argument about philosophy a step further, if the party is the practical Idea, then, for the Lenin of State and Revolution, the soviet is the Notional concretization of the working class as a subject for itself.

Let me try to pull the threads of this article together. What is the dialectic of revolution? First, revolution remains primarily a question of the working class (in a broad sense—those who sell their labor power to live) becoming a revolutionary subject and taking power over the fate of humanity. Second, this involves a dialectic of reform versus revolution within the working class; and this dialectic is subjective, is political, rather than a mechanical question of economic status (such as labor aristocracies). Workers do not all move to a revolutionary position at the same time. Instead, political and philosophical struggle are needed among workers—albeit among workers whose situations differ by workplace, oc-

cupation, and time. Revolution thus involves a struggle over politics within the working class as a fundamental aspect of the struggle against the bourgeoisie and the state: first, for the formation of workers' councils and then for the taking of power by these workers' councils. This dialectic is furthered if the revolutionary sections of the working class organize themselves as revolutionaries to take direct action (strikes, general strikes, street battles, etc.) before and during the upsurge in class conflict; and to win the great majority of the working class to understand that the seizure of power is needed.

Where a revolutionary working-class party has not been organized (and strong) before the revolutionary situation erupts, the result has been defeat, as in East Germany in 1953, in France in 1968, in Portugal in 1975, and in Poland in the early 1980s. On the other hand, the mere organization of a working-class party that is subjectively revolutionary is not a guarantee of victory either over the state or over the possibility of counter-revolution, as is indicated by the failure of the working class, in spite of the strength and revolutionary will of the anarchists, to take and hold power in Spain in the 1930s; and by the failure of Russian workers to keep power due to a combination of objective situations and their subjective lack of understanding of workers' democracy as the key to socialism through the formation of a self-developing working-class subject.

What does this mean politically? To me, it suggests that we need to form a revolutionary workers' party. Is this the dreaded "party to lead"? Yes, at certain moments. The organized revolutionary tendency within the working class needs to be able to take initiatives, to be able to speak to the working class as a whole, to be able to help the workers as a whole to organize and win general strikes and form workers' councils, and to be able to win the great majority of other workers to a politics, philosophy, and action for socialist revolution.

It does not mean that the party has to be top-down, or monolithic, or undemocratic. Furthermore, it does not mean that the party (or parties) have to be philosophically united. Indeed, it is my strong suspicion that we need to have parties (or a party) that are open to widespread discussion about the meaning of the dialectic, of what we will do after we take power, etc. It also does not mean that, if we have one party predominant at the moment of the seizure of power by the workers' councils, that this party should necessarily stay dominant after things stabilize (or even until then.)

In conclusion, then, I am struggling to develop a concept of dialectics and politics that will help us in what we all want: a revolution in which the commodity form is overthrown, workers negate capitalism and their own alienation, and the essential core of the "new subjectivities" can be freed to undergo necessary continuing struggles under conditions where the interests and consciousness of the great majority (the now-in-power working class) are aided by the ending of oppression and the salvation of the planet. Anderson's book is a useful and brilliant help in our search for this politics, this dialectics, this philosophy. It is not enough, however.

Sam Friedman is author of *Teamster Rank and File: Power, Bureaucracy, and Rebellion at Work and in a Union*. Further discussion of Anderson's book as well as a response to Friedman's comments will appear in the August-September N&L.

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Nearly every event in Bosnia since the Dayton "peace" Accords has been determined by the fact that the two greatest perpetrators of genocide, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and Bosnian Serb General Ratko Mladic, have been granted impunity from past and future crimes. This includes their patron, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. Nothing is more indicative of the pre-ordained hollowness of the U.S.-NATO imposed so-called "peace" than the fact that U.S.-NATO authorities have bent over backwards not to hunt and arrest Karadzic-Mladic, despite the fact that they are the two most wanted war criminals in Bosnia.

As the UN-sponsored, U.S.-funded war crimes trials opened in The Hague, only a handful of low ranking soldiers and self-styled butchers were actually on trial, out of the over 75 actually indicted in absentia. They had been arrested in Europe, not Bosnia. The only officer arrested, Gen. Djordje Djukic, who planned and carried out the deadly shelling of Sarajevo, was later released on "humanitarian" [sic!] grounds because he had terminal cancer.

Supposedly the tribunal, the first held since those at the end of WWII against German and Japanese war criminals, has broken new ground by defining mass rape, overwhelmingly of Muslim women, as an "official" war crime. But the de facto sanctity provided to Karadzic-Mladic makes a mockery of this proceeding.

One court official described the proceedings: "Not only do most of the accused and all of the commanders stand beyond reach, but the court is being blocked from amassing the necessary evidence to try suspects. No power, whether within NATO or the individual governments, shows any willingness to assist in the operation."

Dissidents rally in Burma

In defiance of Burma's military dictatorship, Aung San Suu Kyi and thousands of supporters held a conference and rally for the National League of Democracy (NLD) at the end of May, on the sixth anniversary of the 1990 election which the NLD won overwhelmingly, but was suppressed by the regime of General Ne Win.

Over 250 delegates were arrested leading up to the conference and only 17 actually attended. San Suu Kyi was vilified in the military-controlled press as a "snake" and a "sorceress." Still, 10,000 people came to hear her speak at her house in Rangoon where she had been under house arrest from 1990 until last July, yet continued to speak out each week.

The military quickly outlawed public gatherings, but another 5,000 supporters demonstrated on June 8. The NLD has proposed a new constitution which outlaws military rule. The Ne Win regime has countered with its own planned constitution, as well as more repressive laws and arrests. The military fears most the kind of explosion that erupted in 1988, when workers and students led a revolt against the generals.

NEWS & LETTERS

War criminals still walk free in Bosnia

And the court alone does not have the clout to see justice through."

The Clinton administration has raised the threat of reimposing economic sanctions on Serbia to pressure Milosevic to remove his agents in Bosnia. But Clinton is loath to undertake any action which would upset the U.S. timetable for Bosnian elections in September, and the beginning of a U.S. troop pullout before the U.S. presidential elections. They have pressured the Bosnian government, Western European officials and U.S. authorities in Bosnia to certify that conditions exist for "free and fair" elections by Sept. 14.

The recent city elections in Mostar show a different reality. Nationalist Croats and Muslims, under the eyes of several thousand NATO troops and election observers, manipulated the elections to maintain the city's division into Croat west and Muslim east. Elections under these conditions are simply the further codification of Bosnia's partition.

In Sarajevo, where the concept of multiculturalism

was fought for so intensely, the increasingly narrow nationalist Bosnian government issued a decree to take over tens of thousands of apartments which it handed over to Muslim refugees for the countryside. There have been at least 400 reports by Serbs of beatings and intimidation when they tried to return to their homes in Sarajevo. The so-called "right to return" by refugees, under the Dayton Accords, throughout Bosnia is being met with similar intimidation and actual death.

Any Muslim, Croat or Serb who tries to reestablish the reality of multiculturalism is being met with harsh circumstances. In the Mostar elections, Josip Musa, a Croat who ran for city council with Muslim support, said, "Anyone who is not an extremist is forced to campaign covertly. And those of us who called for a united Bosnia and a return to civilized society are not even given a voice, much less a chance to run."

The stench of war criminals walking the streets of Bosnia has permeated the air. It will not be cleared until they have been removed and justice delivered.

Protests escalate in France



June anti-racism rally in Marseilles

In addition to continuing labor unrest in France, as seen in the 40,000 workers who demonstrated for "full employment worldwide" on June 25 on the eve of the G-7 economic summit in Lyons, other protests took place in June. On June 22, over 100,000 participated in the largest-ever lesbian and gay rights demonstration in Paris. Called by "Lesbian and Gay Pride," much of this year's demonstration focused on demands for the legalization of lesbian and gay marriages.

The week before, 6,000 anti-racist demonstrators took to the streets of Paris to oppose the conservative government's ever-tightening restrictions on immigrants and asylum-seekers. While not as large as some had expected, the demonstration included an unusually strong participation by sub-Saharan African immigrants, many of them facing eviction from their homes if government plans to raze 20 immigrant workers' hostels in the Paris region go ahead.

There were large contingents of immigrants from Senegal, Turkey, and the Caribbean, a number of leftist and

anti-racist French groups such as the Movement Against Racism, Anti-Semitism and for Peace, as well as a militant delegation from ACT-UP. The call for the demonstration stated in part: "We denounce a Europe which, while every day walling itself into a besieged fortress, reduces itself to viewing 'the foreigner' as the cause of all of its problems."

Finally, on June 9, 10,000 demonstrated in southeast France against the ecological damage which would be caused if a plan to build a Rhine-Rhone canal were to be put into effect.

German unrest continues

At the end of June, as Chancellor Helmut Kohl rammed his anti-labor austerity package through the Bundestag, up to 200,000 workers showed their continuing determination to fight via brief work stoppages, human chains, and car caravans.

Two weeks earlier, on June 15, the largest labor demonstration since 1945 took place when more than 350,000 workers from all over Germany converged on Bonn to protest Kohl's plans for massive cuts from the government budget for sick pay, health care, and other social benefits for working people.

At the June 15 rally, workers slogans included "We don't want a two-tier society." Also, in a slap at the U.S. government's draconian policies toward workers and the poor, including its failure to even enact a health care plan, the demonstration chanted, "No to the Americanization of society."

In another sign of discontent with the status quo, thousands of lesbian and gay activists, as well as leftists, disrupted Pope John Paul II's June 23 visit to Berlin. Instead of the planned slow triumphal ride along the famous Unter den Linden boulevard, the Popemobile suddenly had to pick up speed to avoid a barrage of eggs and tomatoes.

Some demonstrators were dressed as condoms, while a nude lesbian protester was arrested for attempting to approach the Pope. For his part, the Pope ignored petitions from progressive Catholics to rehabilitate Martin Luther and to change church policy on contraception, women's rights, celibacy and other issues, although even he did not dare to read aloud on German soil a preposterous part of his prepared speech which referred to the "resistance of the entire church" to Nazism.

Crisis in the Arab world

The June 25 terrorist attack which killed 19 U.S. troops in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, was the second such incident in less than a year, and it once again appeared to be the work of Islamic fundamentalists.

Saudi Arabia, the world's major oil producer and Europe's major supplier, is a reactionary absolute monarchy in which all leftist and democratic organizations are banned. The monarchy has long used a version of Islamic fundamentalism as a legitimating ideology.

Recently, groups of ultra-fundamentalists have been challenging the regime because of its corruption, its ties to the U.S., and its supposed "laxity" in enforcing Islamic law. The fundamentalist opposition has grown in part because of deteriorating economic conditions and in part because of continuing outrage of the U.S.-led Gulf War. Many of the fundamentalist terrorists in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere were originally armed and trained by the U.S. and Saudi Arabian governments during the war in Afghanistan.

All of these events are occurring in the context of the election of the rejectionist Benjamin Netanyahu by Israeli voters in May, something which has created tremendous anger and bitterness throughout the Arab and Muslim world. Only days before Dhahran, Netanyahu had arrogantly spurned the rather moderate position taken by the Arab summit in Cairo.

All too often nowadays, anger at social and economic conditions in the Arab world is being channeled and organized by reactionary fundamentalist groups. In Morocco recently, one saw a rare glimpse of another way of giving vent to that mass anger through a class struggle against capital and the state. On June 5, a one-day general strike to demand a raise in the minimum wage and an end to firings of union activists was massively followed all across the country. There was also, on the same day, a spontaneous uprising of some 2,000 youths in the slums of Tangier, who battled police and set banks on fire.

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NEW
See
page 8

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

25¢

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Maiming— and blaming —workers



by B. Ann Lastelle

Keeping your machines clean is as important as making rate, our unit manager told us. Machines won't run when they're dirty, he said. We were scheduled at that time to produce more units per week than was possible even by making rate on every single shift. So Gloria, a young Mexican worker, lost most of the little finger on her left hand trying to clean her machine while it was running.

The supervisor took her into the office: How did it happen? Was the machine running? Gloria was crying and protesting weakly, "but you want us to clean." The company nurse arrived: Trying to get a day off, huh? "No, I was just trying to..." The unit manager was called. No one looked for the finger, no one called an ambulance—until two workers intervened.

Management had encouraged each shift to police the previous one. If your work area isn't cleaned to your satisfaction, they told us, don't accept it. Arguments broke out between workers on different shifts. Gloria's relief and his supervisor complained every night about the way she left her machine and the floor around it.

A company stooge claimed the day after the accident that Gloria always had had the option to shut down her machine to clean spills. In fact, she had shut down before the end of the shift two days before the accident. When she brought her paperwork into the office, the supervisor was all over her about not making rate. That's

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

Absolute negativity and Black mind



by Lou Turner

Here the subject and object of the Idea are one—either is the intelligent unity, the notion. This identity is absolute negativity.

—Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, para. 381

You know, S.C., when I began this letter to you in response to your question about what so abstract sounding a concept as "absolute negativity" means (see "Black World" last issue), I thought it might be enough to just explain how absolute negativity (the negation of the negation), operates objectively, that is to say, how things become what they become. This, after all, is the meaning of one of the other concepts you asked about, "Dialectics." Every thing has a history and logic of its own which are not supposed to contradict its nature.

But at each stage, or what Hegel likes to call moment, of something's development, the negation of the negation working silently within it turns out also to involve our subjective attitude towards it and the world as a whole. (And we know how important attitude is.) This relationship of subject to object happens to be what Hegel is driving at in the above quotation from his most concrete and real philosophic work called *The Philosophy of Mind*. Hegel thinks that the mind is the most concrete of all realities.

That's why everything we've covered so far now brings up a crucial problem that the movement has struggled with for a long time, namely, what happens when you do take the immediate reality at face value? What happens when instead of questioning and challenging the immediate results of long fought struggles, you question the need for mediation, the need for struggle? Once that is your attitude, you have no use for history, for ideas, for dialectical mediation.

(Continued on page 8)

ON THE INSIDE

From *The Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya* •
The ongoing revolutionary Black
dimension page 4
Essay • Lenin, Hegel's Logic, and what
lies beyond page 5
Slavery, ethnic cleansing in Sudan page 8
Editorial • Holbrooke shields Serb
war criminals page 9

New immigrants enliven U.S. struggles and its contradictions

by John Marcotte

New York—"I am now a citizen of the world." This is how an undocumented worker from Ecuador describes himself. You will find him working in the heart of Manhattan for three dollars an hour, ten hours a day, with one Sunday off every two weeks. You may see him as "the Other," the "illegal," the scapegoat of politicians who can no longer even pretend to offer solutions to our problems but can only try to set us against him.

The complex reality that the immigrant worker brings to North American labor struggles is a new phenomenon, not only in the U.S. but globally. The last 20 years have seen a tremendous increase in working class immigrants from Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and Africa, who are forced to emigrate to Europe and the U.S. by the global economic crisis, the resulting restructuring and austerity, and by failed revolutions. In their countries, there simply are no jobs and no way left to survive for millions of these workers.

And now with the anti-human welfare reform bill President Clinton is set to sign into law, food stamps, Medicaid, and any other kind of welfare assistance to legal immigrants and refugees will be cut off. Fully 40% of the savings in this bill comes from cutting off immigrants. This, despite the fact that immigrants pay approximately \$85 billion in taxes nationwide, and receive only \$5 billion in welfare aid.

The Clinton-Republican welfare bill comes on the



Mexican border activists burn effigy of California Gov. Pete Wilson.

heels of the "Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act" passed in April, which is already deporting legal immigrants for committing petty crimes; the immigration "reform" bill modeled on California's 1994 Prop. 187 that is making its way through Congress; and the passage of a House bill, August 1, making English the official language of the U.S.

Under the last bill, election ballots may not be printed in any other language than English, prompting Chicago Congressman Luis Gutierrez to call the law "the Jim Crow of the 1990s." While "Latinos are certainly its pri-

(Continued on page 10)

Welfare repeal intensifies class war

by Terry Moon

With President Clinton's cowardly and opportunistic signing of the criminally cruel welfare bill, he has powerfully demonstrated how dead democracy is in the USA. He didn't care that the traditional Democratic constituency of women, labor and civil rights advocates were horrified with this bill which will legalize slave labor and impoverish hundreds of thousands of people already marginalized in this racist, sexist, capitalist society.

Clinton didn't care because he didn't need to. Even the *New York Times* could see that "liberals...have no alternative but to back him." If there is "no alternative" there is no democracy—which doesn't mean Dole isn't worse. We were witness to a man with more power than anyone else on earth holding on to it by destroying the lives of poor women, children, immigrants and workers.

Despite all the horror in this bill, we must limit ourselves to a few of its low points.

- Well over one million poor children will become poorer. The executive director of the Child Welfare League of America, David S. Liederman, said that Clinton's claim that this bill will help families "is absurd."

- Cutting food stamps and welfare benefits, the severe lifetime limits on receiving benefits, ending benefits for a baby born while a woman is on welfare, the forced labor, and the harsh eligibility requirements for disabled children in poor families seeking Supplemental Security Income, all will swell the ranks of the poor.

- As a gift to capitalists everywhere, this bill makes it harder to strike and punishes workers who lose their job for any reason by making it impossible for an unemployed worker without minor children to collect food stamps for more than three months.

- Working does not mean leaving poverty. One third of the U.S.'s 15 million poor children have at least one full time working parent. The paltry rise in the minimum wage will not bring a family of three out of poverty. As one angry 21-year-old welfare mother said of the job programs she has experienced: "They tell you you can find a good job. To them a good job is any job. You can get one of them and you're still going to be poor."

This is not a question of Clinton turning his back on the poor. Clinton has attacked the poor to ingratiate himself with right-wing capitalist America, insure his continued reign, and deepen the ideological assault on the U.S. population as he struggles to cover up capitalism's failure to solve its endemic economic problems.

(Continued on page 10)

New York—Defying a rain storm, 300 angry New Yorkers gathered at City Hall, July 31, to protest against the pending drastic cuts in welfare benefits. Sponsored by the Coalition Against Hunger and other community groups, WHAM (Women's Health Action Mobilization), and the Welfare Reform Network, the demonstration aimed to have President Clinton veto the "Welfare Reform Bill" just passed by Congress. The proposed law would throw an additional 1.5 million children into poverty by cutting welfare, food stamps, and SSI for mothers, children, the elderly, immigrants, unemployed and low-income workers.

Chanting "Veto!" and "They say cut back—we say fight back," we marched with protest placards to the Federal Building. In a dramatic street theater performance, people wearing masks of the House, Senate, Dole, Gingrich and Clinton, threw multiethnic dolls representing children into a large net, the "safety net," which they then cut, to symbolize what will happen if the bill becomes law.

Speakers emphasized the disastrous effects of the legislation on the sick, women, children and the poor. One speaker from Long Island said she had been one of the poor who clean the houses of the rich. She debunked the politicians' lie that getting off welfare makes you "independent." "I'm dependent on my pay check every week, on my child care provider, and on my auto mechanic to let me pay him overtime," she said. She also mocked programs for welfare recipients that are supposed to prepare them for jobs by teaching them to get up early in the morning. "Anyone who has children already has a job and gets up early every day to do it," she said.

The concluding speaker, a Black woman who is director of centers for seniors and children in the Lower East Side and the Bronx, was furious about the idea put forth by some in government that children who can't be supported by their parents should go to orphanages. She called this a contradiction of the same officials' emphasis on family life. She also commented on the Olympics, where she saw a gold medal winning Black athlete crying as the Star Spangled Banner was played; this has never been the "land of the free" for many people, she pointed out.

A repeated theme by speakers at the rally was that we should call the president to tell him to veto the legislation. The irony is that they were exhorting people who might not have a quarter in their pockets to make a local call, let alone a toll call.

—Sheila and Anne

Teresa Ebert's regressive materialism

by Laurie Cashdan

The crying need for a new kind of confrontation between feminist theory and the current retrogressive reality has become so acute in the U.S. since the 1994 elections that several feminist scholars I know turned with great hopefulness to Teresa L. Ebert's new *Ludic Feminism and After: Postmodernism, Desire and Labor in Late Capitalism* (Univ. of Michigan, 1996).

What lured them to Ebert's book is her harsh critique of poststructuralist feminists who denigrate emancipatory, revolutionary ideas as "unrealizable" and her claim that she has discovered an alternative. Ebert defines "ludic feminism" as "poststructuralist assumptions about linguistic play, difference, and the priority of discourse." Arguing that such theories "substitute a politics of representation for radical social transformation" (p. 3), she demands a return to Marx and historical materialism.

If the yearning among many radical feminists for an emancipatory alternative is what makes a book like

Woman as Reason

Ebert's so attractive, it is the impatience to get there immediately that makes the book dangerous. Ebert's book, despite insightful critiques of postmodernism, poses a return to an old economist materialism that bears little resemblance to Marx's dialectics of "revolution in permanence." At this juncture, when a number of feminists are turning again to Marx, we must ask, to which Marx will we return? What are the consequences?

Ebert argues convincingly against many features of the "post-al" moment. Her point throughout is that we need to reject abstract, linguistic notions of "difference" that avoid the roots of ideology—including gender—in capitalism. She disagrees that a fundamental historical break has replaced the former industrial society, and its class antagonisms, with a postindustrial society in which technology becomes uncoupled from production relations.

Ebert attacks theoretical approaches which convey family and sexuality formations as discrete, localized sites of power deployment, uncoupled from the capitalist social totality. Similarly, she rejects substituting "discourse" and abstract notions of power for Marxist ideas of ideology that illuminate the relation between bourgeois thought and capitalist production relations.

The consequence of all these postmodernist points for Ebert is that they mystify the capitalist exploitation that needs to be uprooted through revolution. Nevertheless, when she poses historical materialism as the opposite of ludic idealism, she excises from Marxism exactly what makes the Marxian dialectic a revolutionary one.

First, she relies heavily on Lenin's 1908 *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Lenin's crudest expression of historical materialism. Ebert compares ludic theories to the idealists that Lenin critiques and then rejects idealism as bourgeois thought that prevents social change. However, while rejecting ludic theories, she also throws out Hegelian-Marxian dialectics.

Unfortunately, in embracing Lenin's materialism she never follows him to his 1914 study of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, where he rejected his earlier "orthodox Marxist" view that theory merely reflects the objective world. He instead concluded that "man's cognition not only reflects the world but creates it." To see what is at stake with cognition's creative powers for feminism, we need to look closely at Ebert's paltry discussions of Marx and Hegel.

Ebert critiques poststructuralists for substituting for class conflict abstract concepts of difference. By appropriating Hegelian notions of the dialectical battle between the universal and particular, they make difference

Battered women inside

San Francisco—California Coalition for Women Prisoners formed a committee called "Battered on the outside, violated on the inside" since so many women are in prison for fighting back against their abusers. During my 13-month "stay" at Valley State Prison for Women in Chowchilla, I had time to listen to women's stories. One woman shared the story of her years of abuse and final defense.

It is impossible to think that a man who lived through what this woman lived through would have been seen as a criminal. A man held at knife point, beaten with fists, kicked, pistol-whipped, tied up and left for hours to listen to his children in the next room being beaten, and then released to be brutally sodomized would not have even been arrested on murder charges if he finally got free long enough to shoot the perpetrator. He would more likely be given praise and viewed as a hero defending his life and the lives of his children.

But she is still serving time on a second degree murder charge. As if she has not already been through enough, the prison time she is doing is filled with all the degrading and dehumanizing efforts of the California Department of Corrections.

I have heard other, similar stories. Why is a woman in such circumstances subjected to arrest and convicted of murder when a man would be acting in self-defense? Of course the answer is the double standard.

We challenge that double standard. We stand with many who are not willing to allow this sex bias to go unnoticed and unanswered. We strive to get public support for women who must defend themselves and who find themselves in prison for having done so. Maybe more justice could get done if prosecutors knew that the world was watching.

—Dana Ryan

into "eternal" antagonisms outside capitalist relations. But she then claims that "ludic theorists occlude the Marxist rejection of Hegelian idealism" (p. 230). This statement belies her affinity to post-Marx Marxists like Althusser, Mandel and others who attempted to flush out from Marx's historical materialism his rootedness in Hegel's "dialectics of negativity."

She compares ludic theorists to M. Proudhon, who Marx critiqued for making abstract moral truths the determinant of history, rather than seeing ideas as abstract expressions of material relations. Ebert then plucks out Marx's remark that Proudhon's obfuscation of history produced "a phantasmagoria...[I]t is not history but old Hegelian junk...a history of ideas" (p. 230). She thus leaps over Marx's sharp contrast between Proudhon and Hegel. Where Proudhon substituted a dialectic of "absolutely pure morality," Marx wrote *Poverty of Philosophy* that Hegel posed a dialectical movement of "absolute reason," or the "negation of the negation."

The text she entirely erases from Marx's legacy for feminism is his 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*. There, in his "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," Marx demystifies Hegel's idealism yet clings to Hegel's dialectic of negativity as "the moving and creative principle" of history, the process by which alienated humanity reaches for freedom. Moreover, Marx takes the human relation between man and woman as the measure of freedom, arguing against any resolution that would maintain that relation as one of possession and therefore halt the creative dialectic of freedom.

By totally expunging this "creativity of cognition" from her own "historical materialism," Ebert eliminates what makes Marx's body of ideas into a philosophy of revolution—what allows us to reach for new human relations, including those of gender and sexuality. Ebert, in fact, takes us back to the old and familiar post-Marx Marxist ground of class analysis of gender ideology. This is a reversal which could easily derail the small but significant trek of feminists back to Marx.



Women in Black protest weekly in Tel Aviv. Here they demonstrate against closure of West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Fanon and feminism: perspectives in motion

by T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting

Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask. Directed by Isaac Julien.

Frantz Fanon was indeed a very complex figure whose life was equally filled with complexities. As a global theorist of revolution, his ideas, his thoughts, written in the 1950s and very early '60s, continue to have significance and will reverberate well into the 21st century for those committed to liberation theory and praxis. And from that standpoint, Isaac Julien had the raw materials for a rich filmic production. Director of the intriguing and provocative *Looking for Langston*, the promising director's second project surprisingly falters.

The docudrama's potential to shine quickly begins to fade at the moment one reads the subtitle: *Black Skin, White Mask*. A play on Fanon's clinical treatise on disalienation, *Black Skin, White Masks*, the psychiatrist is ironically reconfigured as the very subject of his study.

Throughout *Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask*, one is presented with insightful portraits as well as caricatures of Fanon. Those who intimately knew Fanon paint a reflective, passionately engaged individual. Those whose engagements with Fanon are for the most part relegated to postmodern/poststructuralist academic settings and cultural studies conferences, present a pathologized, personally splintered Fanon.

This is no accident. *Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask's* raison d'être, if you will, is to demythologize Fanon, to contest through subjective interpretation the legacy of Fanon as a liberation theorist. This stalwart, "darling of the New Left," as Susan Brownmiller wrote contemptuously in *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape*, this psychiatrist of decolonizing medicine, was supposedly plagued by psychical contradictions.

Save for the informative analysis presented by various members of the Fanon family and Fanon's friends, Martinican literary theorist Raphael Confiant, colleague Jacques Azoulay, and psychoanalyst Alice Cherki, there are at least six highly contentious Fanons offered up: the bitter, brooding Fanon portrayed by a British actor; the conservative Fanon; the Fanon in search of recognition from the colonial father, hence he wrote *Black Skin, White Masks*; the homophobic Fanon; the disalienated Fanon who berates duped women of color, yet finds solace in the arms of a French wife; the romantic Fanon

5th International Meeting of Women Against War

Budapest, Hungary—I almost did not get there. At the border between Hungary and Serbia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), my friend Judit suddenly became the object of the state/military sanctioned violence that Women for Peace oppose.

Having handed her passport to the Serbian border guard, she resumed reading. The guard flew into a rage, slapped the magazine out of her hand, refused to give her passport back, and ordered her off the train. When she refused, he summoned a superior who promptly hit her in the face, knocked off her glasses and grabbed her so hard that she still had large bruises four days later.

Hearing all the shouting, the seven women traveling with my friend headed in her direction. When the second guard threatened to have her bodily removed from the train, we all got off. When he tried to take her alone into the station house, we stepped between him and her. Fifty-five minutes of intimidation later he allowed us to re-board.

For the next three days in Novi Sad, 250 women from every part of the former Yugoslavia, in concert with supporters from the rest of Central and Western Europe, Greece, Turkey, the Middle East, and North America plunged into an intense program aimed at ending this kind of state-sanctioned violence.

Organized by the Women in Black of Belgrade, the conference is part of an ongoing program. Women in Black protest the war, violence against women, and the painful, destructive impact of nationalism. Women in Belgrade also operate an SOS hotline for battered women, participate in a women's studies program, and work with refugees who are mostly women and children.

In Novi Sad, the focus was on the Dayton Peace Accord, the situation of apartheid in Kosova, women's identities, and the future of feminist politics worldwide.

Dayton was credited with halting the shooting, but faulted for strengthening Slobodan Milosevic. It has also diverted funds from human rights projects and to major construction projects, largely under the control of war profiteers.

In Kosova, where 90% of the population are ethnic Albanians, people have been driven to a psychological and economic razor's edge. In 1991 all Albanians working in civil service jobs were fired. Schools, universities, and hospitals were taken over by Serbs. Anyone refusing to sign an oath of loyalty to Slobodan Milosevic lost all health care benefits.

The Albanian population has vowed to avoid war, setting up a parallel government complete with schools, universities, and clinics. But constant harassment, random shootings, police brutality and murder, and the ever-tightening economic vise are taking a severe toll.

The climax of the weekend was a demonstration held in the town center of Novi Sad. The 250 women, dressed in black, held a silent vigil. In the end, hand-in-hand with an equal number of townspeople, we formed a circle as large as the square itself.

—Marguerite Waller

who simply did not understand the intricacies of Algerian culture; and the sexist Fanon, which is of particular interest here.

In light of resurgent criticisms of Fanon as antifeminist, a noticeable portion of this docudrama is spent on Fanon's gender politics. Since these critiques have emerged from within the academy, the mouthpiece for this agenda is squarely situated among the film's academic "actors."

Fanon's essay, "The Woman of Color and The White Man," is proffered as the evidence. As I have argued elsewhere,² given the degree of Mayotte Capecia's blackphobia and antiblack woman pronouncements, articulated in both *Je suis martini-quaise* and *La negresse blanche*, alternate defenses of the novelist and specious readings of Fanon as sexist because he took her to task, represent a dangerous feminist politic, unconcerned with Capecia's antiblack racism and sexually-racist logic.

But there is more to Julien's film on the question of Fanon's regressive gender politics. Issue is also taken with Fanon's "Algeria Unveiled" (*A Dying Colonialism*). His vision of a new Algeria is roundly held up as a measure of his romantic political thinking.

Fanon's feminist consciousness, profoundly articulated in his extolling of Algerian women's resistance to colonialism and traditional culturally prescribed roles, his discussion of the marginalization of girls and women in "The Algerian Family" (*A Dying Colonialism*) and his advocacy of women entering themselves into history as subjects, becomes obscured in the flurry of observations regarding his longing for an ideal model of masculinity represented in the virile Algerian and hence his blindness to Algerian women's marginalization in the *maquis* and within Algerian national culture as a whole.

Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask has revelatory intimate moments. But those moments are weighed down by undramatic drama, postmodern cultural turns, and ideological revisionism. In echoing the counsel of one disappointed viewer following the film's screening: "Read Fanon!"

²See my *Fanon and Feminisms: Theory, Thought, Praxis* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997); Also see my essay, "Anti-Black Femininity and Mixed Race Identity: Engaging Fanon to Reread Capecia" in Fanon: *A Critical Reader*, eds. L. Gordon, T. Sharpley-Whiting, and R. White (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996).

Sweeney brokers SEIU sellout at Kaiser

Oakland, Cal.—On May 28 the Local 250 SEIU bargaining team shocked the membership by recommending for approval a Kaiser management proposal that was basically the same as one rejected by a 96% plurality over eight months earlier. This agreement included a wage freeze, diluting seniority rights, new management prerogatives on staffing and other takeaways. For eight months the union had carried on a boisterous corporate campaign filled with militant rhetoric. AFL-CIO President Sweeney personally appeared at the Kaiser flagship hospital in Oakland. He gave a rousing speech calling the struggle against Kaiser's restructuring plans a hallmark for the whole union movement.

Most members saw it as a lot of sound and fury signifying nothing. The prevailing view is that as soon as Kaiser ceased dues deduction the Local 250 leadership immediately grabbed onto Kaiser's first offer. Many of us are questioning the validity of the vote of approval during the first week of June because the union refuses to divulge the actual figures.

Part of the agreement contained a side letter which effectively gave Kaiser the green light to implement new job categories. CNA (nurses) and other unions, falling under the threat of Kaiser's wholesale reorganization, pleaded to no avail with Local 250 to reconsider its recommendation, which effectively destroyed the

unity pact actively promoted between the unions at Kaiser.

The backdrop of all this is that AFL-CIO President Sweeney had a private closed door meeting with Kaiser executives. There he proposed "an innovative 'strategic partnership' to bring the workers, their unions, and management together to work out solutions." Is this sell-out contract, passed without real worker participation, his idea of an innovative strategic partnership? In the simmering feud between sister unions competing to grab more of the action under this massive health care reorganization at Kaiser, the rank-and-file voice is lost in the jurisdictional disputes. Meanwhile Kaiser management is congratulating the unions on their cooperative spirit.

—Kaiser worker

Taylor Chair victory

Mr. Lou Turner, News & Letters,

I am proud to inform you that the strike at Taylor Chair in Clarksdale, Miss. has ended with a tremendous victory for the members of IUE Furniture Workers Division Local 282.

Because of your support and the members' solidarity and determination, we were able to defeat the Company's efforts to take away their union health insurance, sick pay, and optical benefits. In addition, they defeated the Company's efforts to freeze wages, increase employees' annual deductibles from \$100 to \$3,000 and demand that the employees pay all future increased costs of their health insurance.

The contract is for 28 months, and the employees will receive a 2.5% increase each year. Thank you again for all your help and support. We couldn't have won without it.

—Willie Rudd, Local 282 President

Home risks patients' health

Memphis, Tenn.—The conditions in the retirement home where I work are bad, not only for the workers, but for the patrons who live there. We are supposed to have a 30-minute lunch and I haven't had but one since I've been here. There isn't enough help for the number of people who live here. The home is paying \$6 an hour and making three people do the work of five.

When I started working for the Visiting Nurses Association, which contracts me out to this home, they said we would be paid the same as the company we worked for before paid, and we would be doing the same amount of work.

They first said we would have to help the lady that was serving in the dining room. Then they said we would have to do it. They already have humongous bacterial growth from us coming in there because we've changed diapers, given baths, and we don't have clean clothes to change into. It's outrageous.

A lot of people say, I'm going to find another job. I like working with elderly people, but when it comes down to these other things, that's too much.

—Black woman health care worker

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

an option?

Private industry in 1994 reported 6.8 million cases of injury and illness. It is true, as Karl Marx wrote in Capital, that "capital is reckless of the health or length of life of the laborer, unless under compulsion from society." That "compulsion from society," at least in the form of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, is under attack.

Repetitive stress injuries have increased tenfold in the last ten years; carpal tunnel syndrome leads the list of average time lost from work, higher even than amputations. With the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) declaiming against OSHA's "arrogance," House Republicans included in a 1997 appropriations bill a sentence that would prevent the agency not only from developing ergonomic rules for preventing repetitive stress injuries, but from "recording and reporting occupational injuries and illnesses directly related thereto"! What is next?

Despite NAM's hysteria, there are capitalist prerogatives which OSHA will never touch—production schedules, layoffs, overtime, job combinations—all of which create tremendous pressures on workers and, therefore, unsafe conditions. The 460 workers locked out at the Uno-Ven refinery in Lemont, Ill. are fighting that battle.

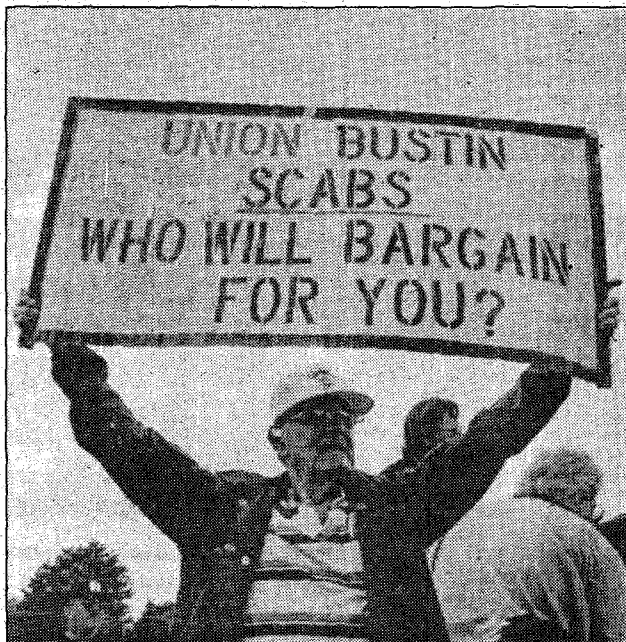
"Uno-Ven seeks to combine certain job classifications, and shift supervisory and safety inspection duties onto operations and maintenance personnel. While attacks on premium pay and seniority rights angered members, OCAW Local 7-517 President Michael Hendry says that members' 'concerns are for safety' but the company says safety costs too much money" (Labor Notes, August 1996). A 25-year-old worker was killed at the plant last December.

Gloria has been off work for two months. A tendon attached to the finger was torn from her elbow, and she is undergoing painful physical therapy. Safety devices were installed on her machine. We didn't have a safety meeting. Perhaps management was afraid to talk to us, so many people were angry.

The production rate is to be raised from 50,400 units per eight-hour shift to nearly 64,000 units after September. We have undergone an audit which, if favorable, will place all responsibility for quality on production workers. Preventive maintenance tasks, which are assigned to production workers and some of which require removing guards from machinery, are to be 100% complete even though we are not to shut down the line to do them.

"Capital is reckless of the health or length of life of the laborer." Marx wrote of whole generations stunted and killed by overwork; against that arose the workers' struggle for a legally limited working day. One death, one lost finger, one life lived in pain is too many! Under what banner will we struggle for our health and safety?

Bury scab Detroit papers



Detroit—On July 13, the first anniversary of the Detroit newspaper strike, several thousand strikers and supporters rallied in downtown Detroit and at the Sterling Heights printing plant. The strikers had insisted on an "open mike" so they could speak for themselves. Marchers carried a coffin prepared for the Detroit News and Free Press which have continued to publish by employing scabs who they say will "permanently replace" members of the six unions who have not crossed the picket line.

One woman striker told us: "Eighty percent of us are still out. We are phoning and faxing AFL-CIO President John Sweeney to urge him to call for a National Labor March on Detroit. During this year on strike I have learned of a lot of so-called 'dead' strikes, where people have been out as long as five years. We need to reach out to those folks: I know they would support a labor march, and we need to support them."

At a recent meeting of The Labor Day Committee, strikers and supporters agreed that Sweeney needed to be pressured to support the march but debated over whether such pressure should be applied in public. Many felt the confrontation should take place within an upcoming AFL-CIO convention, because we need his support, and the scab papers would portray any conflict as divisions in the labor movement.

A union brother disagreed: "Sweeney works for us!" He added that the plug had been pulled on the July 13 rallies—which gained national media attention but no progress in negotiations. "By inaction, they're trying to write this thing off." He had coined a new slogan: "The workers have been replaced—the leaders are next."

Another striker added that the term "Deep-six Detroit" had been heard from an AFL-CIO field representative who had stated that the AFL-CIO was going to turn its focus to strawberry pickers. Someone else had heard that Sweeney would favor Labor Day as a Day of Solidarity, but in "workers' own communities." Despite this, a lot of strikers and supporters have no intention of giving up.

—Strike supporter

Organizers frustrated by limits of Union Summer

Mobile, Ala.—As students participating in Union Summer, among 1200 in the project, we have mixed feelings about it. In Jackson, Miss., we got on the news, and at one nursing home where 30 worked, 20 signed union cards. Wherever we do handbilling, cards are signed. It's an experience and people are receptive. But all workers are struggling and Union Summer is only targeting nursing home workers. They should include other workers too.

The organizers act like we are all students but there are workers here too. They treat us all like children. They tell us: "You can't do this, you can't do that, you can't get personal items, you have to sign in and out." Everyone is stressed.

A typical day starts with us on the bus at 5:45 a.m. traveling to where we handbill; lunch at noon, out again at 2:00 p.m. for a press conference, then handbill to 5:00, rest for maybe 40 minutes, then at 6:00 you hear a speaker or see a film. We don't stop until after 10:00. There are no breaks and people run out of things, or need things and can't get them.

They make it easy for the students because a lot of them are the children of union officials. They get the best shot at something that somebody else really deserves. Many of the kids really don't know anything and they are in the intern program. The union is running to get organizers but they're running the wrong way. What of those who have experience in the plant? Those should be the ones on this caravan, they make damn good organizers.

There are many serious problems, but there is no doubt that the workers here are having a big effect on the students and also getting a good response from the people we meet.

—Union Summer participants

Key Toronto hotel strike

Toronto—The 600 hotel employees at the Toronto Westin Harbour Castle have maintained a 24-hour picket line since the strike began on June 9. The hotel management wants to make changes in working conditions at the Westin, including piecework for housekeepers, effectively reducing wages by 30-50%; revoking the four-hour minimum shift guarantee; reclassifying positions, and contracting out others; and even requiring employees to clean uniforms at their own expense.

Since the workers went out on strike the Westin management has hired 200 scabs to do the jobs of Local 351 members. Ontario's new Progressive Conservative government repealed the law prohibiting the hiring of scabs during strikes. This strike is seen as a test for the government's new law. Several workers I spoke to on the picket line told me that other hotels in Toronto are waiting to see the results of this strike before signing new contracts with their workers.

Although the mood on the line was good, if a little quiet, one picketer I spoke to told me she was angry that the contracts now expire at different times, making each local weaker. Ten years ago all the hotel contracts expired simultaneously. A similar strike in the early 1980s lasted only three weeks.

A defeat for the workers at the Westin Hotel will only embolden other companies to try and roll back the wages and working conditions of their workers.

—Neil Fettes

No to 50¢ supervisors

Memphis, Tenn.—We were on strike at Dobbs Catering for a year. And we are still in the same situation only some things are worse. They play off one against another, people against people. So you're not going to get upset with your foreman, but you're going to get upset with your co-worker because they gave him a 50¢ raise and a little authority. But he's on the clock, just like I am.

Now they're giving us new over-the-road driver's tests when your birthday comes up. What most of the people are missing are the questions concerning luggage and not Dobbs Catering. But we don't load the luggage, we don't drive carts. They were giving an elderly gentleman hell because he missed some questions. They sent him home, wouldn't let him drive until he passed. Finally the union had to deal with it. They need more drivers, not less. It doesn't make sense. We don't understand why we test on something that we never deal with.

There used to be 300-plus people working at Dobbs and then they brought in a new manager who cut Dobbs in half. His pocket got big, but about 150 people lost their jobs.

We got a new supervisor who used to be a driver like us—and he was the worst kind. He was a lousy driver, didn't care, and didn't have any idea about getting along. He upset everyone, but they made him a supervisor. Since we deal with airplanes we have a briefing every morning. A briefing means short. But he goes on for 15 or 20 minutes. They tell you over and over again, as though they're talking to children—some people have been doing the job 30 years.

The new supervisor was a scab. No union workers become 50¢ supervisors. We don't want it. We know what kind of things they do so we decline. They want to play mind games. Sometimes you see beyond that and say no. I prefer to be where I'm at.

—Dobbs Catering worker

**From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
MARXIST-HUMANIST
ARCHIVES**

Editor's note: At the beginning of 1986, in the face of a new resurgence of U.S. racism as witnessed in the white lynching of a Black man in Howard Beach, New York, and Klan marches in Forsythe County, Georgia, Raya Dunayevskaya, in collaboration with Lou Turner and John Alan, wrote an introduction/overview for a new expanded edition of Turner and Alan's 1978 pamphlet Frantz Fanon, Soweto, and American Black Thought. This year marks the tenth anniversary of that publication. However, it is Dunayevskaya's summation of ongoing Black struggles in South Africa, Haiti, and the U.S., as well as the illumination she cast on an emerging international dimension of Women's Liberation, unseparated from her discovery of new theoretical moments in Marx's work on what was later called the Third World, and the "new humanism" of Frantz Fanon, which compels our publishing excerpts from this essay for the first time in News & Letters.

I

So great is the power of the Idea of freedom that it has shaken apartheid South Africa to its foundation. The struggles for freedom against that totalitarian leadership's armed-to-the-teeth, undeclared, savage civil war upon the unarmed Black majority population are endless. The point now is: What to do to correct this fantastic imbalance of forces? How to recognize the freedom idea itself as a great force of Reason in this life and death struggle? What can be done internationally to solidarize with it?

The impulse for the first edition of this pamphlet was the fact that in 1976, the year before he was imprisoned and murdered, Steve Biko had declared the affinity of Black Consciousness in South Africa with American Black thought and with Frantz Fanon's philosophy of revolution, which Fanon had called a "new humanism." News & Letters had been detailing and analyzing all the objective events in South Africa and had turned its November 1977 lead article over to "Steve Biko Speaks for Himself." Charles Denby, the editor of News & Letters, followed this up by proposing that we develop the whole concept of the affinity of thought of these three dimensions into a special pamphlet to be entitled: Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought. The events—of freedom struggles and of counter-revolution—from 1978 to 1986 have compelled this present expanded edition.

This was the period of the three Black uprisings in Miami. While these didn't seem to be "directly" related to the brutal treatment that the Haitian refugees were receiving at Krome [detention center] (since they were opposing the conditions of Black life right here in the United States), the truth is that the Black community in Miami, and indeed throughout the U.S., identified with the Haitians.

The "little shorties" in Miami were proof of what we had underscored in the 1978 edition when we wrote:

"Contrary to the reports in the white press, Black America's actual rejection of white capitalistic-imperialistic exploitation, with or without Black lackeys, is, at one and the same time, a time-bomb that is sure to explode, and a time for thinking and readying for action."

As ground for the present high stage of revolt, whether it be in South Africa or the United States, it becomes all the more important to remember the achievements of the 1960s and the early 1970s. We are not referring only to the turbulence of the 1960s in general, but rather to the fact that it reached a climax in 1968 only to "perish," that is to say, the revolution remained unfinished. But that was not death. On the contrary, beginning with 1969, there were all sorts of new objective developments; and though one had to work under the whip of counter-revolution, the new forces of revolution did not separate their actions from their hunger and search for theory, a philosophy of revolution to go with the actual revolution.

In South Africa, in 1969, the new activity saw the dockworkers on strike win support for the first time from white students in Cape Town and Witwatersrand. In the U.S., along with new wildcats and anti-Vietnam war demonstrations, the search for theory led to the call for a Black/Red Conference. It was on January 12, 1969, that the Conference Charles Denby had called together met in Detroit and considered the objective situation inseparable from questions of philosophy and revolution.

The analysis of this conference, and the phenomenon of Women's Liberation as a movement, led that year to our Perspectives thesis, "The Needed American Revolution." In tracing the history of the Black dimension and its struggle and idea of freedom, we wrote: "Thus, where the white rulers denuded a continent via the infamous triangular trade in slaves, rum and molasses, the Blacks were exchanging ideas—the ideas of freedom, the experiences of Black masses in action, and their aspirations for a new world."

II

In the more than a decade and a half since we wrote that 1969 Perspectives thesis, the Black dimension has further expanded and intensified. As a British revolutionary recently wrote us:

What has also happened, burst onto the historic scene, since 1978, is that the triangular trade of ideas and revolts has found a fourth port of entry—actually three ports, Bristol, London, Liverpool... The Black revolt is demanding that those demonstrators not separate their fight against

Ongoing revolutionary Black dimension



Frantz Fanon, and rally of workers at founding of COSATU.

apartheid from the fight against racism at home....

The whirlwind of events which have brought South Africa to the threshold of revolution, during the last year, reveals ever broader segments of society being drawn into the liberation process. Not only have mixed-race and Indian communities clashed with the South African Defense Forces, but reports have shown white students describing the brutal treatment they have suffered at the hands of the police for expressing their solidarity with Black South Africa. Moreover, a multi-racial contingent of student protestors has for the first time attempted to make a direct link to imprisoned African National Congress (ANC) leader, Nelson Mandela, by marching on Pollsmoor Prison.

Contrast that to the UN's Reagan-dominated Decade for Women Conference that was convened in Nairobi, Kenya. It is true that even there, at the official conference, the African women's liberationists made their presence felt. A good deal more representative of women, both in the U.S. and around the world, was the non-governmental "Forum '85," which did a good job of exposing the retrogressionism of Reaganism.

The greatest events, however, took place neither at the government-sponsored meetings nor at the Forum, but on the lawn where masses of women assembled, some just on hearing that there was such a women's conference taking place.

Elizabeth Wanjara, a Kenyan women, heard about the Decade for Women Conference on a transistor radio in her hometown of Bungoma, about 450 miles from Nairobi. It inspired eight other women to get together with her, sell honey and knit sweaters to raise enough money to buy her a bus ticket.

The fact that she is illiterate only proves that intelligence is not related to reading and writing, but to experience and your own thinking. It was this woman who said (and she was the only one who said it) that she knew exactly why she came: "I have to go back to all the women in my place and tell them the stories on all the happenings here. I have to tell them how we can be ourselves—no longer just have babies and have babies dying."

What is important about this Conference is that thousands of women, spontaneously and many without any previous experiences at such meetings, all had a passion for freedom and gained strength from knowing that there were others who felt the way they did and that they did not have to solve their problems individually.

It was clear that the women did not agree with the official conference that this was the end of their decade, but considered it to be the beginning of a totally new relationship. This is what we mean in pointing out that all the ramifications of the Conference are first now to be worked out. The very category that we made of the maturity of the women in our age—Woman as Revolutionary Force and Reason—was created to show that women are now ready to be part of the dialectic of thought as well as of revolution.

III

What is crystal clear in the high intensity of the Black dimension's struggle—whether we are talking of Labor, Women, or Youth—is that the post-World War II world manifests the presence of an unquenchable thirst for freedom. What the emergence of the Third World as a whole world has revealed is just how continuous are those freedom struggles. It is this movement from practice that is itself a form of theory which has been challenging revolutionary intellectual-theoreticians to develop a new unity, a new relation, of theory to practice.

As Marxist-Humanists, we developed this category about the movement from practice back in the 1950s, with our analysis of the Absolute Idea* as not only a movement from theory to practice, but a movement as well from practice to theory, while mass movements were erupting the world over. It was seen in the U.S. in production, where the workers were battling Automation. It was seen in East Europe in the new type of revolts from under totalitarian Communism, which erupted first in East Germany in 1953 and came to a climax in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. Nor did they stop there, as they spread to the Third World—the Afro-Asian-Latin American worlds—against Western imperialism. Marx's

*Raya Dunayevskaya's Letters on the Absolute Idea, written May 12 and May 20, 1953, are available in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1989).

1844 Humanist Essays were thus brought out from the dusty Archives onto the historical stage.

The todayness of Marx's Marxism is evident from the moment he founded a new continent of thought and of revolution. Thus, even what then (the 1840s) appeared very minor, his sensitivity to language, was evident in his objection to the capitalist use of the word, "Negro," as synonymous with "slave." This sensitivity was integral to his whole philosophy, which he called a "new Humanism." It characterized his entire revolutionary life. Whether it was his concept of the Man/Woman relationship or the developments he was working on in the last decade of his life on pre-capitalist societies and what we now call the Third World, or whether it was what he wrote about Iroquois women or the communal life form, it is this which led to our considering Marx's last decade a "trail to the 1980s," now that his *Ethnological Notebooks* were finally transcribed and published.

Here is how Raya Dunayevskaya expressed this view of Marx's revolutionary new Humanism with regard to the Black dimension during her Marx Centenary tour in 1983:

Marx's reference in the Ethnological Notebooks to the Australian Aborigine as 'the intelligent Black' brought to a conclusion the dialectic he had unchained when he first broke from bourgeois society in the 1840s and objected to the use of the word, 'Negro,' as if it were synonymous with the word, 'slave.' By the 1850s, in the Grundrisse, he extended that sensitivity to the whole pre-capitalist world. By the 1860s, the Black dimension became, at one and the same time, not only pivotal to the abolition of slavery and victory of the North in the Civil War, but also to the restructuring of Capital itself. In a word, the often-quoted sentence: 'Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the Black skin it is branded,' far from being rhetoric, was the actual reality and the perspective for overcoming that reality. Marx reached, at every historic turning point, for a concluding point, not as an end, but as a new jumping-off point, a new beginning, a new vision.

The global ramifications of the relationship of theory to practice, of language to class structure, and above all, of conflicting tendencies in the leadership to the masses, makes it all the more imperative to keep philosophy and revolution inseparable. That this is no academic question has recently (1983) been brought to a shocking counter-revolutionary conclusion, not alone because of the U.S.-imperialist invasion of Grenada, but because what made it easier for American imperialism to finally realize what had been its objective ever since the revolution in 1979 was that the first shot against the leader of the revolution, Maurice Bishop, was fired by his co-leaders, Coard and Austin. Differing tendencies within that revolutionary movement were kept from their international supporters as well as from their own masses. These differences have not been fully faced to this day.

IV

Toward the end of the 1950s we had completed our major theoretical study, *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* which is where we declared our goal to be Marxist-Humanism. This work, which was published in 1958, was followed with a booklet entitled *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions*. That was the very period when Frantz Fanon was completing his *Wretched of the Earth* where he declared for a philosophy of revolution that would be inseparable from the actual revolution. He called it "a new humanism."

Frantz Fanon had given up his French citizenship to become an Algerian revolutionary. At the same time, he was sharply critical of "the native intellectual (who) has thrown himself greedily upon Western culture...Rabelais, Shakespeare and Edgar Allan Poe."

The same type of critique of intellectuals, and indeed political leaders, was voiced by the great Nigerian revolutionary essayist-poet-novelist Wole Soyinka, who has watched the monolithism that many leaders tried to impose on the revolutionary movement in Africa soon after independence. When asked, "What do you think of the view, often expressed in the United States, that Blacks should not criticize other Blacks?" he replied: "My response can only be the same as I make when I am faced with that special pleading in relation to Black leaders who mess up the minds and lives of the Black peoples they govern: Criticism, like charity, begins at home."

Fanon continued his criticism of the very concept of leader: "Leader": the word comes from the English verb,

(Continued on page 9)

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Essay Article

Lenin, Hegel's Logic, and what lies beyond

by Franklin Dmitryev

Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism: A Critical Study by Kevin Anderson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995).

The retrogression of our time is not only characterized by such degeneracy as genocidal wars from Bosnia to Rwanda and deteriorating living and working conditions from Africa to the U.S. A crucial component is a lack of vision among radicals, manifested in their attacks on dialectics and at the same time on the concepts of emancipation and direct revolutionary democracy. A new book, *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism* by Kevin Anderson, speaks to today's two-sided crisis by revisiting the deep impact of the Hegelian dialectic on the Marxist whose name is most associated with revolution in the 20th century: V.I. Lenin.

LENIN AND HEGEL'S LOGIC

Like today, 1914 was a time of crisis not only for capitalism but for Marxism. The leading established Marxist parties betrayed the cause by backing their own imperialist rulers in World War I. While the greatest revolutionaries like Rosa Luxemburg and Leon Trotsky broke politically with the betrayers and opposed the war, Lenin was the only one who saw a need to rethink Marxism on a philosophic level. Without suspending his militant opposition to the barbaric war, he took the time to study Hegel's *Science of Logic*. The resulting radical change in his thinking made a lasting impact on world Marxism.

Anderson's careful tracing of Lenin's progress in his study shows that, while still in the early parts of the *Logic*, Lenin was already criticizing the "vulgar materialism" his notes on Hegel's established Marxism. As against its rigid opposing of materialism to idealism, Lenin embraced Hegel's "transformation of the ideal into the real." This constituted the beginning of Lenin's break with his own earlier *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*.

Anderson shows how the break took shape. Once he got into the *Doctrine of the Notion*, last of the three books in Hegel's *Science of Logic*, the dialectic, rather than economics, emerged for Lenin as the center of Marxism. His agreement with Hegel's attack on the method of math and science distinguished Lenin from the prevailing scientific Marxism, and he reached what Anderson calls the high point of this study with his statement: "cognition not only reflects the objective world, but creates it." The key to social revolution was now seen as not only objective forces but the self-development of subjectivity.

This and all Lenin learned from Hegel's dialectic about contradiction and self-movement were reflected in the uniqueness of Lenin's theoretical work on imperialism, national liberation, the state, and revolution. In particular, Anderson shows Lenin's drawing out of the dialectical opposite to the new stage of imperialism and the centralized, militarized state. That opposite took shape as the national liberation movements, the "lower and deeper" layers of the working classes, and the new form of organization: the workers' council (soviet).

As opposed to "orthodox" Marxism's dogmatic insistence on enshrining the proletariat as the sole subject of evolution, Anderson sees "a wider, more multifaceted concept of subjectivity" as indispensable to Marxism and argues that Lenin laid the ground for it.

Lenin's encounter with Hegel created what Raya Dunayevskaya called the "Great Divide in Marxism" and saved the way for the November 1917 Russian Revolution. However, far from canonizing Lenin, Anderson patiently traces the "ambivalent" strands in his thought and practice—in philosophy, politics, and organization—beginning with Lenin's *Hegel Notebooks*.

PRACTICAL IDEA'S PULL

From the beginning of his encounter with *Science of Logic*, Lenin was bent on defending materialism from Hegel. By the end, he largely stopped and broke with vulgar materialism. Nevertheless, he still held a somewhat one-sided preference for materialism. Throughout the *Doctrine of the Notion*, Anderson shows, Lenin tied the concept of Nature in Hegel to materialism which led him at times "to subordinate the dialectic to materialism in a one-sided manner."

This could be seen halfway through the *Doctrine of the Notion*, in the chapter on "Teleology," where Lenin introduced the category of Practice into his discussion of Hegel. When he reached Hegel's section on the Practical Idea, Lenin still preferred practice over theory and materialism over mind, though it is just here where he articulated the creativity of cognition.

As Lenin, Hegel, and *Western Marxism* shows, Lenin was so enamored of Hegel's statement that the Practical Idea is higher than the Theoretical Idea that his reading of both was compromised. Not only did he not seem to draw anything out of his reading of Synthetic Cognition, he highest stage of the Theoretical Idea, he did not grasp Hegel's critique of the Practical Idea, seeing it instead as the resolution of contradiction. Such is the pull of the Practical Idea.

This "real barrier in Lenin's thought" (to borrow a phrase from Anderson) is the nub of Raya Dunayevskaya's 1986-87 critique of Lenin for stopping at "the threshold of the Absolute Idea." (The section on the Practical Idea comes directly before the last chapter of *Science of Logic*, "The Absolute Idea," which begins with the unification of Theoretical Idea and Practical Idea.) It was she who argued that Hegel's warning of the "unresolved contradiction" in the Practical Idea "did not faze Lenin because he felt that the objective, the Practical Idea, is that resolution." (*Philosophy and Rev-*

olution, pp. xxxviii-xxxix).

By the time Lenin arrived at the end of the *Logic*, his restricted reading of "The Absolute Idea" led him to disregard most of the last paragraph. He was excited by Hegel's transition from the logical Idea to Nature, which he read as "stretching a hand to materialism," but ignored Hegel's continuation on to Mind which he must have seen as overly idealistic or theological.

This exact last passage led Dunayevskaya down a very different path, to her own "philosophic moment," that is, the birth of Marxist-Humanism. The discussion of subjectivity/objectivity and negation of the negation in Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, she concluded, would illuminate the new society in such a way as to help Marxists find pathways to it in the post-World War II age. Furthermore, her 1953 critique of Lenin centers on his disregard of this passage (see *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism*).

Thus, in both philosophy and politics, Lenin's truncation of the content of the Absolute Idea chapter impeded his ability to help future generations resolve what Anderson calls the "central problem for Marxist dialectics in our age [of transformed and aborted revolutions]: What happens after the revolution? Is it possible to have a revolution that does not end in totalitarianism?"

Lenin, Hegel, and *Western Marxism* also discloses the consequences of Lenin's failure to reorganize his concept of the centralized vanguard party, from constraining his concept of national liberation to undermining the dialectical content of his critique of bureaucracy. The pull to pose Practice as what will resolve contradictions in the revolution may have been crucial in preventing Lenin from breaking with the old vanguard party concept. The party seemed to belong to the privileged sphere of Practice that evaded dialectical rethinking.

Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism

A CRITICAL STUDY



KEVIN ANDERSON

In Memoriam: Bessie Gogol (1906 - 1996)

The words that most immediately come to mind in an attempt to catch the character of Bessie Gogol—a founding member of News and Letters Committees, who died on August 2 in Los Angeles in her 90th year—are "old Bolshevik." Not as a pejorative, for no one more hated the Stalinist characters she fought against all her life. And not as a question of age, for the deep, uncompromising commitment to the revolutionary movement the words are here meant to convey characterized Bessie from the moment she came, as a young teenager, with her family from the Ukraine to live in America.

No one who ever met Bessie could deny that she was an unforgettable character—an "original character" and, as such, an "American original"—who at the same time remained an important link for Marxist-Humanism to the Russian Revolution before it was transformed into its opposite. For it was the American revolution that Bessie was determined to help come to be. It is why she identified so completely with the Black dimension in this country that everyone in the Black community knew her and her activities for Black liberation, that began long before the Civil Rights Movement burst forth and continued through every stage of the Black revolt her entire life.

Her contributions to that struggle were legendary; she was known for moving things from being talked to death to being achieved, as when two Black women at a CORE meeting in 1961 wanted to get a contingent for the Freedom Rides started from LA and saw the whole meeting bogged down in argument over whether there was enough money to get an ad to publicize CORE. Bess took the floor to say she was all for publicity and a committee could take care of getting the ad, but what would really get publicity for CORE, and free publicity at that, was getting a Freedom Ride going from there. The house came down and the first contingent got off quickly after.

BESSIE WAS KNOWN as well for never going anywhere without a bundle of N&L. At factory gates or community meetings or cultural events or picket lines, Bess was there setting up a lit table or selling the latest issue. Workers and activists, in discussing N&L, would refer to it as "Bessie's paper."

But it was not activity per se that energized her to such extraordinary levels. It was her seriousness about ideas—in particular, the idea of Marxist-Humanism. From the very beginning of News and Letters Committees, that is what she was determined to see made real. Despite her claim that she "didn't know English" and "couldn't write," Bessie spoke so strongly about what News & Letters meant that she brought both workers



Far from being an abstract point of debate, the pull of the Practical Idea is at the heart of the incompleteness of our era's revolutions. Its pull continues to sap radical movements everywhere.

One commentator on Lenin and organization, Sam Friedman, finds Anderson's work "useful and brilliant" in its presentation of the importance of Lenin's return to Hegel (see News & Letters, July 1996). However, Friedman himself joins post-Marx Marxists in reproducing Lenin's major limitation: he too poses Practice—equated with Party—as the resolution of contradiction.

Even so, for Lenin, the reason to return to Hegel in 1914 was an organizational question, implicitly at least. How could revolutionary Marxist parties be reduced to reformism and betrayal? Instead of seeking an immediate political answer—like Nikolai Bukharin and others who blamed the working class as a class for subjectively imperialist impulses—Lenin did not attempt an answer until after his Hegel studies enabled him to analyze the new stage of imperialism and discern a transformation into opposite of a part of the working class into an "aristocracy of labor." This, he held, supplied the objective impulses that transformed socialist parties into their opposite.

Therefore, argued Lenin, a "bourgeois labor party" is inevitable in all the main imperialist countries. But Lenin did not fully explain what was in the nature of revolutionary parties that allowed them to be transformed into their opposite. Similarly, Anderson shows, he never applied his dialectical category of transformation into opposite to the question of the danger of bureaucratization of his own Bolshevik party.

This barrier in Lenin's thought kept him from working out the dialectical opposite of this bureaucratization despite the radical vision of revolutionary mass self-activity he had worked out in *State and Revolution*. This is a barrier of the age, and not just of one person. Even those, like the Trinidadian post-Marx Marxist C.L.R. James, who thought they had conceived of an opposite—spontaneous movements as the opposite of the party—found only dead ends as they posed both spontaneity and party one-sidedly as Practice, without the subjectivity of a philosophy of revolution. Not until Dunayevskaya took up this question in 1953 was the problem posed in a way that could get past the threshold of the Absolute.

Consequently, 20th century radicals have been trapped in the land of Practice, bouncing back and forth

(Continued on page 11)

and intellectuals into News and Letters Committees, the most prominent being her husband, Louis Gogol, who authored "A Doctor Speaks" column in N&L from 1955-64. Bessie wrote so clearly to intellectuals about why Marxist-Humanism should have a voice that she found countless platforms for Raya Dunayevskaya to speak on her works from the 1950s onward.

There was good reason why Raya Dunayevskaya sent Bessie to Europe in 1958 when *Marxism and Freedom* had just come off the press, to further the kind of international relations that led not only to an Italian edition of that work but to the international conference of state-capitalist tendencies Raya organized in Milan the next year. It was Bessie who also accompanied Raya on her trip to Japan in 1965-66 to search for co-thinkers as Raya was just beginning her work on *Philosophy and Revolution*; and who made another trip with two young comrades to Europe in 1977, where the reports she sent back were of everything from her discussions with feminists active in the revolution in Portugal, to the news that the Italian edition of *Philosophy and Revolution* would be off the press by the end of the year.

Bessie's insistence that she didn't really know how to "write" is refuted by her letters, not only from all these trips but from her journeys into Marxist-Humanism as Raya worked it out and asked for discussion about the new categories she was developing. Many of these letters can be found in the discussion bulletins published by News and Letters Committees over the years.

THUS, IN A DISCUSSION BULLETIN at the time draft chapters of *Philosophy and Revolution* were being circulated, Bess had written a letter that was titled "On How I Do My Homework" in which she wrote about how important it had been to her to follow all the footnotes in *Marxism and Freedom* as not just "references" to back up a statement, but "indications on how to proceed beyond and work out something for today." What she wanted to share, she said, was "how I do my homework when I come up against daily problems." The daily problem she began with was a question that concerned the Black revolt, and turned out to be about the importance of theory. This she traced back in the footnotes to a relationship to the American role in the Second International, which thought that the goal of socialism could wait, while in the "practical" struggles they could show phenomenal gains. "And yet all these 'phenomenal gains' made them blind to the 1905 Revolution and by 1914 fully betray the proletariat," Bess concluded. "If the only thing all this makes any one think of is 1905 or 1914 or even 1917, it means nothing. But if the way I'm doing my homework makes someone think of how it relates to today, how we can avoid repeating mistakes, and catch that link of continuity Raya is always talking about, perhaps we can begin anew..."

We mourn the death and honor the memory of an unforgettable Marxist-Humanist. —Olga Domanski

CATCHING THE MEANING OF THE PRESENT HISTORIC MOMENT

What you say about Bosnia in your Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1996-97 (see July 1996 News & Letters) really hits home. You can see some of the parallels to the situation here, in that the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia got started by burning churches and mosques. I'd like to get a copy of your book on Bosnia to read more about what people did there.

**Black worker
Memphis**

Basically, I couldn't agree more with the Draft's analysis of the objective situation. Without a clear sense that there is a humanist alternative to capitalism's destruction and greed and without a Marxist-Humanist vision to guide them, the inevitable struggles run the risk of degenerating into chaotic violence or of being diverted back into the sick system. Without a Marxist vision of a possible un-self-limited revolution, hope can also be manipulated by "masters of substitution" who pretend to oppose the system. Thus, while Farrakhan preaches his reactionary Black-capitalist Utopia based on "self-reliance," the labor bureaucrats of the AFL-CIO are busy substituting uncritical support for the worst anti-labor administration since Coolidge for their much-ballyhooed drive to raise the minimum wage and organize the unorganized.

The time to project that alternative is now before the ultimate battles are joined. Are we not obliged to conclude that however awesome the task and however "small" we may feel, we have no right to turn away from this challenge?

**Richard Greeman
Massachusetts**

I've read some Hegel and I can sometimes follow along pretty well with some of the philosophical theories in News & Letters. However, it would greatly facilitate my grasp of some of these philosophical phrases if I could have access to the definitions of some of the terminology utilized, for instance the term "Practical Idea." Does this have anything to do with Lenin's lack of faith in the working class to achieve anything more than trade union consciousness due to the material social context of capitalism, and his resolution that the working class can only be led to revolution by a vanguardist party of intellectuals?

The commentary on the presidential election being bereft of any actual substance or remedial program is right on! To my mind, they're only concerned with form, appearance. What is it the Buddhists say? "Form is emptiness, and emptiness is form." To me it seems that all out war has been declared on the working class by the two bourgeois political parties and their ruling class pals. I thought also it was interesting that due to technological displacement of workers, no real increase in production is achieved. Translated, more profit for the bosses!

**Prisoner
Texas**

The Draft Perspectives critiques those who think that subjectivity has been swallowed up by the object. There is certainly that tendency within feminist thought as well, along with those that take the movement for granted as "everyday resistance." Accepting the limitations of the given is something that we even saw traces of in the aftermath of the Beijing Conference. What we learned, even—or especially—from our own meeting on Beijing, was that when the women were in China they did feel that they could see beyond the limits of the given. But despite the new level of dialogue reached, when women came back home they didn't know how to follow through.

**Terry Moon
Memphis**

To say that productivity growth in the U.S. economy has been very uneven over the past two decades doesn't tell the whole story. The telecommunications industry produces more with less than half the workers they had ten years ago. This furthers the illusion that high-tech is the solution and not the problem. A few

years ago the U.S. was called a basket case compared to the rest of the developed economies. Now it is deemed the "most competitive." This too will come to an end, just as the U.S.'s prominence in the post-World War II economy came to an end in the 1970s.

**Ron Brokmeyer
Oakland**

The rapid economic re-colonization of the world (even of formerly advanced industrial countries like Canada—not speaking of Mexico, and so on), is causing a vast financial dislocation, favoring these giant corporations and the financial elite, and impoverishing even more the vast majority of humanity (including the U.S. workers themselves). While temporarily these giant corporations dramatically increased and are increasing their profits in the short term, they are also planting the seeds of the self-destruction of the whole system and the so-called Global Economy.

While only ten years ago 90% of profits were reinvested in production and only 10% were used for speculation (stock-market, future-market, currency, interest rate speculations and so on), now the ratio is reversed and 90% is used for speculation and only 10% (mainly in Third World countries) for production! That this "house of cards" is bound to collapse is not in question, just the timing and the method of its demise and its catastrophic consequences are up to the future.

**L.G.
Canada**



CLINTON'S WELFARE FRAUD

On the day Clinton said he'd sign the Welfare "Reform" Bill, my friend told me the following: "I have a \$5-an-hour job. My caseworker told me they'll let me keep the first \$200 and then take 20% of the rest. How can I get ahead? Besides, what if I get laid off? I have no one to help me out. On top of that, the next day I received a letter stating my AFDC was cancelled. I was getting \$179 every two weeks, Medicaid for the girls and me, \$300 in food stamps, and vendored gas and electric. How can I meet expenses on \$5 an hour? I've been trying to get off aid for several years; I've gone to school and gotten jobs—this last time, I had put in around 30 applications."

"They told me my kids were too old to have a sitter, and I told them I would not take a night job and leave my 13-year old home alone. I don't think it's right for Governor Engler to treat me this way. I'd like to see how he'd manage with his three kids. He should put himself in other people's shoes."

**Reader
Detroit**

Marx wrote so movingly of the children laboring in British factories—how exhausted, malnourished and ignorant they were. Today, we see similarities in the children of welfare moms forced to "work." Children are left alone, subject to boredom, junk food, TV, and bullying from older children. No one teaches them skills, or talks to them to develop their minds. Yet they are "responsible" for themselves or for younger siblings. More and more I see one and two-year olds playing outside with no adult in sight. But even at a less extreme level, a mother who must work won't be able to take the time necessary to obtain health care or fight with the schools to get what their children need.

**Susan Van Gelder
Detroit**

AMERICA'S RACISM

John Alan's Black-Red column on the "threatening power of color-blind racism" (June N&L) was impressive. He anticipated precisely how the Supreme Court would justify its decision that basically said minorities have no right to equal representation in Congress. And it

Readers' Views

really is "the prevailing mood of white racism." Hardly a day goes by that the local paper doesn't print an angry letter from a white attacking anyone who dares to call an incident racist, no matter how flagrant.

**Engineer
Tennessee**

I live in Lathrop Homes, and for the last two years they have been moving a lot of people over to our projects from the building they are getting rid of at Cabrini-Green. They say there are going to be a lot of changes, but uh uh. They say they will get rid of the gangs, but the gangs run the joint. They say they will get rid of all the troubles and fix up the place.

But all they have done is fix up the front of their office by planting plants. In my building the roof leaks, and the roof door is broken open. They won't fix our front doors because it is not in the budget. How can they fix up the front of their office, if there is no money for improvements? The only reason they want tenants on Social Security is that they know we pay our rent, but all we get for our rent is two-and-a-half rooms that leak. My bedroom was unlivable for two years.

**Angry resident
Chicago**

FEMINISM TODAY

I liked your article on the Berkshires Women's History Conference. It said to me that there are many feminisms. We're centering on women, but there are faultlines between us. It's important to talk about this because the ideas of the early women's movement are being revisited because of our failures. This is why I was so excited to see the ad for Raya Dunayevskaya's Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution. I went right to the library and got it. I loved her idea of a total philosophy, and not dismissing it because it was produced by a man, Marx. I'm going to use it in my class.

**Black feminist professor
Indiana**

I was talking to a middle-class abortion rights activist who said people become activated only when it affects them personally. This is an artificially produced politic. We're taught in the U.S. that you should only be worried about yourself and your family—family values!

We're also told that everything goes in and out of fashion. That women's rights will be cool for a while, then there's the "backlash," then women will fight back—as if this is a "natural" rhythm. If we accept this cycle, the revolution will never come.

**Larra
Illinois**

HIGH-TECH AND SWEATED LABOR

The combination of John Marcotte's column about "teamwork" and David L. Anderson's article on "New Tools of Job Control" in the June N&L was illuminating. Although technology is designed to dominate workers and suppress revolt, they showed how new forms of revolt emerge from the workers' thoughts and activities right in the high-tech workplace. This is the opposite of the theories that say technology so totally dominates workers that revolt becomes impossible.

**Franklin Dmitryev
Memphis**

The AFL-CIO leaders want to make a big push to unionize the South. One Black woman involved in organizing catfish plants in the Mississippi Delta told me, "I'm all for putting money into organizing the South. But if they go about it the same way they've been doing it, it doesn't matter how much money they spend." It's never just a matter of mon-

ey, it's a question of what is the relationship between the union-paid organizers and the workers.

The reason union organizers showed up at the auto parts plant in Yazoo City, Miss., that was written up in The New York Times Magazine several months ago, was because the workers, without any benefit of any union organization, had independently organized a group in the plant called "The Wildcat Strike." But the union didn't build on that. They said this is a "good target," sent in the troops and didn't win. Workers will tell you that the key to success in any union organizing campaign is what's called the in-plant committee, an indigenous group of people who are really in charge of how its organized. So it's great the union is pushing to organize and it will make the South look different, but whether it will make a difference remains to be seen.

**Former Freedom Union organizer
Chicago**

We are very skeptical about what the Labor Party will do for Black people. The only thing they have to say about race and racism is on the level of non-discrimination clauses. They asked us to submit proposals for the party's program before the convention, and we were very disappointed that not one of our suggestions made it into the final document. The Black Caucus had to meet at the last minute to make amendments to the program that opposed the burning of Black churches and the redistricting of majority Black Congressional District.

**Black woman from Justice Speaks
North Carolina**

Loyola University is going to start contracting our work out so they only have to pay those workers \$5-\$6 an hour and no benefits. There's only really four of us now—the others are from Manpower and student workers who don't get benefits.

We really need at least 20 people to take care of this campus. But with this contracting out and the early retirement that they're pushing on the older workers, they say that now all we will be responsible for is moving. That won't keep us busy all day and they ain't gonna pay us for sitting around; they're gonna lay us off. They're building a new stadium here to compete with Northwestern. They care more about the buildings than the people who work in them. And they say they're non-profit!

**Black grounds crew worker
Chicago**

The NLRB in Memphis gives Black workers nothing. It's a Black and white situation. Even though the Labor Board knows that a company is violating the law and the worker's rights, the white NLRB board member has to face his white neighbors in Memphis, so he's not going to get that involved. Not many Black people win through the Labor Board in Memphis.

**Tired of waiting
Memphis**

WEST PAPUA'S STRUGGLE

The West Papuans (1,500,000 people) are made of many tribes speaking many languages. Their struggle is against Suharto and Indonesia's U.S.-backed military apparatus which cooperates with Freeport MacMoran, a New Orleans-based multinational corporation operating the world's largest gold mine. Other multinationals investing there are Chevron, Shell, Arco and numerous logging, paper and mining companies.

The struggle of the Papuan people is against forced transmigration, as Indonesians are moving en masse to West Papua, threatening the very existence of their lifestyle and the environment which supports it. This is related to displacement policies which have been called "manifest destiny, Asian style." When a society sees trees as logs or paper, diverse people as savages, and both as commodities to be exploited (by brute force, if necessary), then that society can be described as exploitative, racist, and inhumane.

**Student Activist
Los Angeles**



VOICES OF THE IMPRISONED: AN INDICTMENT OF AMERICAN "CIVILIZATION"

In my opinion the only forms of rehabilitation are here in spite of prison officials. The only rehabilitation they have in mind is to head-fix you and give you the material context to return over and over again to prison, since prisoners are now an exploitable resource. We are job security to these social parasites.

Prisoner
Huntsville Tex.

* * *

I believe that the article you ran on "Voices of Oppression to Prison Warehousing of the Poor" (see May 1996 N&L) should be more widely circulated, as the facts it discusses are ignored by the mass media. It makes me real mad to see all the senseless abuse of power and outright murder that for the most part goes unpunished when the cops do these things. The "choices" for president are both racist criminals. It makes me wonder if this country has any future. I wish there could be some way of organizing prisoners into some kind of collective voice.

Prisoner
Buena Vista, Col.

* * *

Females have a lot of problems that male prisoners do not have. Male prisoners do not get raped by their keepers as female prisoners do. At one point there were about 11 pregnancies on this compound, all conceived behind bars. As we are not allowed conjugal visits and male and female inmates don't mingle, unless the babies were mailed in, the male guards did it! An inmate was raped by a guard here last week. She had been threatened several times. She is so afraid. She has no family support, knows no laws and has a life-without-parole sentence. Naturally I picked up the gauntlet and will do all I can to help her.

Women prisoner
Arizona

* * *

Now that we are in the summer we're all recalling last year when it was so hot that many people young and old died from the heat across the nation. I suffered a great deal from this in the prison

here in Joliet, since I do not have a fan and these cells lack adequate ventilation and protection from extreme heat. Sweat and moisture would form all over me, day and night. Layers of skin would peel away like wet toilet paper. Most of my days were spent 24 hours inside the cell. Once a week I could get outside for just a few hours. It looks like I will have to endure these conditions for at least another year.

Prisoner
Joliet, Ill.

* * *

I am being continually denied parole because it seems that today's penal system is geared more toward punishment, hate and retaliation than the old laws calling for rehabilitation of the criminal offender. It is clear from the crimes done to prisoners in the 1920s and 1930s that punishment does not work. Punishment can do nothing except turn criminal offenders into monsters and create open hate for prison officials.

Paul Goffman
Illinois

* * *

There is too much discrepancy in sentencing. Without a doubt the money that one has at the time of your defense entitles you to a lower sentence, as compared to being stuck with a public defender. Politicians work toward long sentences (such as the three-strikes-you're-out laws), but this doesn't work to better the person who commits the crime. Long prison sentences with no education or rehabilitation programs only work to break the person down further. In time, the convict will have nothing left for him on the outside, making him or her colder and harder in an environment that is indifferent to us.

Long prison sentences work toward only one benefit, and that is for raking the tax payers out of a lot of money. Prison is big bucks! In most states the Department of Corrections is by far the largest state-run agency.

Prisoner
Michigan

* * *

Prison doesn't work, but neither does society.

F.M.
Prisoner, Texas



STOP DEMONIZING GAYS AND LESBIANS!

In support of the Freedom To Marry National Coalition, the New York local committee is galvanizing for an "all out" letter writing campaign to the President and Senators. According to Gay and Lesbian activists the Federal Bill, DOMA, is "explicitly designed to deny federal recognition of same-sex marriages, including the denial of all federal benefits to future legally married gay and lesbian couples. By withholding federal tax, welfare, pension, health, immigration and survivors' benefits, the bill would deny gay couples many of the civil advantages of marriage."

Demonizing gays and lesbians is the same fabric of demonizing welfare recipients, immigrants, Blacks, Hispanics, prisoners etc. Choice is crucial to being fully human and free. Choosing to be other than heterosexual is a form of "revolutionary" evolution in this patriarchal society.

Sheila Garden
New York

N&L AS THEORY/PRACTICE

N&L is a good paper in many ways. The combination of philosophy, news and dialogue is refreshing and useful. I would suggest making an attempt to be less sectarian and exclusive. Left unity is essential now. I am referring to someone calling the Committees of Correspondence "Stalinist." I know several people in the C of C and they're anything but "Stalinist," whatever that could mean in 1996. I don't believe but I think calling a truce with rival Marxist and socialist groups might make a lot of sense.

Subscriber
Portland

I enjoy the philosophic rigor and the "hands on" workers' perspectives combined in the same periodical. It may be too much text to become more popular—but then, I'm not sure about that.

Supporter
Harrisburg

* * *

N&L is consistently informative and enlightening. Please—keep up your greatly needed work.

Steady reader
Quezon City, Philippines

* * *

We continue to find N&L our most important source for international news and information. Most important of all is that you give your readers and correspondents freedom to express their views in your limited space without censorship.

Anti-imperialist group
Malta

* * *

You publish a fine publication; you must keep it going. It has an amazing coverage of world radical events. I'm more activist than scholar, having never got through *Das Kapital* for instance. So I can't place your operating philosophy as well as I would like. But there is so much in each issue of your paper.

B. Sloan
Windsor, Canada

* * *

Right-wing radio has always been retrogressive. There seems to be a return to an era when there was a strong racist, conservative influence—as in the 1950s McCarthy period. But this time Left-wing opposition is either non-existent or greatly deluded. N&L has done a great job in opposing racism and tyranny from the Right.

Activist
Michigan

* * *

Typically an interesting publication! Some of the columns I agree with completely. As a whole, the paper is very thought-provoking. News & Letters is not "fast food."

Karl H.
Petersburg, VA

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Fundamentalism, slavery, and ethnic cleansing in Sudan

by Robert Reed

From nationalism we have passed to ultra-nationalism, to chauvinism, and finally to racism.

—Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

Africa is imploding. Like the core of a massive red star in the throes of death, the continent is collapsing in on itself. A colossal mass of debts and dictators, famines and fratricide, is gravitating into an ever greater density. The vortex of African misery could very well be the war in the Sudan. Its core contains all the reactionary elements necessary for an implosion: racism, fascism, and religious fundamentalism. And these reactionary ideas have organically materialized into natural by-products: slavery, ethnic cleansing, and concentration camps.

Over two million Black lives have been extinguished. The war pits the brutal military dictatorship of Gen. Omar al-Bashir and the fundamentalist National Islamic Front (NIF) of Hassan al-Turabi against the southern based Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), led by John Garang.

The current war touched off in 1983 when former military dictator Jaafar Nimieri instituted the infamous "September Laws." Nimieri, a chronic alcoholic, had seen the light—and the Islamic fundamentalists. To secure his grip on power he became a born-again Muslim, instituted the Shari'a (repressive Muslim law), and divided the south into three administrative districts, thus taking away their regional autonomy.

The north, dominated by Arab Sudanese, tried to impose Islam and Arabization on the south which is mostly African, Christian and animist. The Sudanese Arabs, though racially mixed with multiple African ethnic groups, consider the Black Africans of the south inferior. They are referred to as "abd" or slave, the equivalent of "n-----."

The south of Sudan has been bludgeoned to pieces. It is a semi-desert moonscape littered with burned out villages and human skeletons that rot in the dust. Over four million of the south's seven million inhabitants have been scattered between the capital Khartoum and the neighboring countries of Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Zaire. Hundreds of thousands have died from starvation or from the government's aerial bombardments. But one of the most horrendous aspects of this war has been the return of slavery.

As part of its strategy of war, the military devised the insidious counter-insurgency tactic of forming militias to fight the SPLM/A. Nomadic Arab tribesmen were armed with Kalashnikovs and unleashed with devastating effectiveness on their neighbors—the Nuer, Dinka, Nuba and Shilluk. This policy was the work of former General Burma Fadala, who designed it in 1985 under the civilian regime of Saddiq el Mahdi.¹

The Arab militias or Murahaleen are made up primarily of the Rezeigat and Misseriya tribes. They are the same ones who devastated the south with slave raids under the Mahdi in the late 1800s. As it turns out, the Murahaleen are more inclined to raid an unarmed village than they are to attack the SPLM/A. This was the tragic fate of the Dinka village of Nyamlell in Bahr el Ghazal province. On March 25, 1995 the town was raided by 3,000 Muslim militiamen. Eighty-two people were killed and 282 men, women and children were taken as slaves.²

One of those unlucky souls captured in this slave raid was a 25-year-old widow named Abuk Marou Keer.

1. See Obinna Anyike, "Slavery as war strategy," *African Concord*, Dec. 10, 1987, p. 9.

Abuk's daughter, Abuk Deng, 4, and her son, Deng Deng, 2, were sold off to slavery. "My children were taken captive. They were just crying out my name and asking me to help them. But as I have no way to help them, they cried until their voices died away, and I was crying for them."³ After two months, Abuk and her mother Arik Thom Deng, 53, managed to escape. That was 15 months ago. Abuk has not seen her children since, nor does she know where they are. What makes things even worse for Abuk is that she is blind. Her little girl was her "eyes." Her story appeared in the June 16-18 issues of the *Baltimore Sun*.

The two *Sun* reporters, Gilbert A. Lewthwaite and Gregory Kane, travelled to the Sudan to investigate slavery. (Its existence was denied by Louis Farrakhan, a friend of the regime, after his recent trip to the Middle East.) There, in Nyamlell, they interviewed many people who had relatives in captivity or had escaped themselves.

There are tens of thousands of Sudanese in slavery just as Abuk was. Many of the children have been sold in the north and will probably never be found by relatives.

The Rezeigat and the Misseriya, semi-nomadic tribes, lie along a fault line. Their lands abut the lands of the Nuba, Dinka, Shilluk and Nuer, their pastoralist/farming neighbors. They are in constant competition and conflict over grazing land and access to water.

The Arab and Muslim dominated government has deftly taken advantage of these rivalries by arming the Arab tribesmen. The result has been, in addition to slavery, the widescale theft of livestock and land. Poor Afro-Arab tribes have pushed equally poor African tribes from the edge of poverty into the abyss of destitution. This transfer of wealth forms part of the material drive to "ethnically cleanse."

The systematic "cleansing" of non-Arab, non-Muslim minorities in Sudan has taken its most ominous turn against the Nuba in the northern province of Kordofan. Battalions of Nuba SPLM/A are surrounded by government forces. Under commander Yousef Kuwa they have been desperately holding out for 13 years.

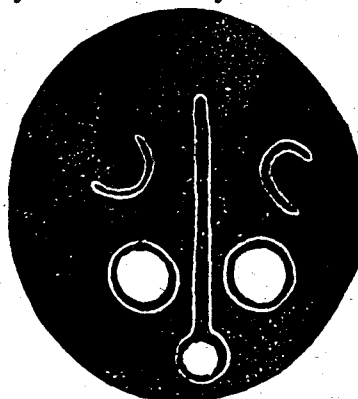
The Nuba had faced the harsh policies of Arabization and Islamization by successive Arab dominated governments because of their steadfastness to remain African in the Arab majority north. With the war they came under physical attacks.

These attacks intensified in January 1992. The government began forcibly relocating Nuba civilians. "A former security official from Kordofan who witnessed assaults on Nuba villages in the Tuleishi area in July and August 1992 described the government's tactics; attacks began with tanks surrounding the target area and shelling the hills to eliminate possible SPLM/A opposition:

"Then ground troops entered the villages, shooting indiscriminately and killing hundreds of civilians. Young men, if they were still in the villages, were often execut-

2. Caroline Cox and John Eibner, "Christian Solidarity International Visit to Sudan," May 31-June 5, 1995. Preliminary Draft, p. 8.

3. Gilbert A. Lewthwaite and Gregory Kane, "Witness to Slavery," *Baltimore Sun*, June 16-18, 1996.



ed on the spot. The people left behind, mostly women, children and the elderly, were gathered and trucked away to Kadugli...The purpose of the military is to evacuate the whole area because they are afraid that the villagers will join the SPLM/A.

"Many women were raped by the soldiers. The dead bodies were left behind as prey for the animals. Only when there was time were corpses buried in mass graves dug by bulldozers."⁴

The devastating results have been that out of approximately two million Nuba there are only 250,000 remaining in the Nuba mountains. At the present time over one million Nuba are captive in concentration camps eu-

4. "Sudan: 'The Tears of Orphans,'" Amnesty International, 1995, p. 80.

(Continued on page 11)

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

In the South, you call this state of mind "plantation mentality." People with this attitude believe that their immediate life situation has no other significance than the personal meaning that they give to it. What matters for this attitude is the faith that we have in our own stubborn way of thinking about the world, so we therefore don't need a philosophy of struggle and freedom. This attitude is a major stumbling block to getting to the second negation.

However, the second negation comes about, that is to say, we achieve absolute negativity, when that which is mediated (the immediate situation) and mediation itself (the first or immediate negation) are both transcended. Recall the great contradiction between theory and practice that Hegel began with (see column last issue)? It now turns out to be a contradiction between our notion of freedom, in which all the problems and contradictions are solved (sometimes we think theory solves them and other times we think practice does), and the real world where contradictions and crises rage on.

This then represents one other aspect of absolute negativity, what Raya calls *absolute negativity as transcending mediation*. It means that if you as an individual, or the people as a movement, are to liberate yourself from your own personal rejection of the status quo, or from the limits of the particular kind of politics originally practiced by the movement to fight a specific form of oppression, you have to learn a different kind of mediation—*philosophic mediation*.

What Hegel means by this was stated in a letter to an early follower of his who was concerned with how to "apply" Hegel's philosophy to life. Hegel preferred this man's question over the abstractions of professional philosophers because Hegel considered him to be someone genuinely trying to relate philosophy to life. "It is indispensable in logic," Hegel wrote, "to consider concepts without reference to their application and consequences."

Although it makes our job of understanding his concept of absolute negativity more difficult, Hegel's point isn't as abstract as it seems. Raya takes Hegel to mean that it is only by dealing with a concept like absolute negativity in and for itself that "the working out of ever-new unities and relations between theory and practice" is possible.

What Raya is really arguing against here is the tendency on the part of intellectuals to reduce the purpose of philosophy to nothing more than "discussing key concepts of philosophic disciplines and centrally intervening in those disciplines." What she is saying is that if we are not to become one-dimensional in the way we think about the world and about our struggles in it, we cannot give up the concept of Subject, that is, of live human beings fighting for freedom, when we try to work out what the dialectic of absolute negativity means for our times.

Otherwise, we end up substituting permanent criticism for absolute negativity, or for what Marx called "revolution in permanence." Raya felt this strongly about the meaning of absolute negativity, and our not keeping it to just a discussion among intellectuals, because absolute negativity to her way of thinking means uprooting this rotten capitalist society and its plantation mentality. Something so crucial for humanity and people's fight for freedom can not be kept in the ivory towers, far away from working people's lives and struggles.

For once the action of working people goes beyond this damned society's plantation mentalities and beyond even the purpose of their own immediate struggles, we will see a new relationship of theory to practice. Out of the life of this new way of thinking and acting, people will discover new dimensions of themselves that they hardly dreamed existed. This is the aspect of absolute negativity that Raya saw as representing a new beginning.

Therefore, not only does the movement from abstract concepts like Absolute Negativity and Dialectics, to concrete experiences, feelings, thoughts and struggles, necessitate a double negation, so does our comprehension of it. When we finally understand that the very way that we think, when it comes to comprehending this movement of absolute negativity, is a revolution in our consciousness, then philosophy itself will become action.

I am certain that these are the kinds of philosophic questions you and other workers will continue to bring into our work on the Marxist-Humanist Statement on the Black Dimension. And I look forward to discussing them with you in the near future. In the meantime, take care of yourself.

Sincerely,
Lou

Black/Red View

by John Alan

The Olympic Games held in Atlanta in July occurred one hundred years after the first modern games began in 1896. To celebrate this anniversary the corporate sponsors of the Olympics like AT&T, General Motors and Budweiser spent millions of dollars to build the Centennial Park in downtown Atlanta.

Entrance to the park was free and a large banner proclaimed that its theme was "diversity and harmony." Clearly, the sponsors wanted to send out an image that Atlanta was a city where people of all races and classes worked together in a "New South," based economically on high-technology and high-finance with a global dimension. This image of multiracial harmony is far from the true condition of race relations in Atlanta; the only harmony which exists is in the cooperation between Atlanta's white and Black elites working together to make the city safe for the Chamber of Commerce.

Gary M. Pomerantz tells the story of the bi-racial cooperation between these two groups in his recent book, *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn*. Both sides wanted to avoid confrontations like Birmingham, Ala. They were aware that fire hoses and cattle prods did not create a good business climate. Racism was softened by "nuances and gestures" of recognition given to Atlanta's Black elite by Atlanta's white elite, thus creating an air of tolerance which downgraded the issue of race on the city's political agenda.

The July issue of *Ebony* magazine turned "downgrading" of race into a principle of Black political success. This article praises the two former Black mayors of Atlanta, Andrew Young and Maynard Jackson, and the incumbent mayor Bill Campbell for bringing the Olympics to Atlanta by giving the city a "new image" because "they brought to the town good ideas, a color-blind men-

'New South' Olympics

tality and a winning attitude."

To whom did these mayors bring the Olympics? Is *Ebony* naive about this? To get the right to be the locale of the Olympic Games means a struggle in the world of high finance and international political intrigue. For Atlanta, it is a business operation which brings billions of dollars into the coffers of the city's corporations. To get this commercial opportunity, Atlanta's big business leaders selected Andrew Young to spearhead the lobbying before the International Olympic Committee.

Young had been a close colleague of Martin Luther King, Jr. and was once the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, which did not make Young a champion of the rights of poor Black people in Atlanta.

While *Ebony* speaks about the quality of "color-blind mentality," a Polish newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, ran on the front page of its July 17, 1996 edition a summary of a report by Human Rights Watch on incidents of stark racism in the police department, jails and courts of Atlanta. It also carried a story of the demolition of the homes of poor Blacks to make a site for the Olympic Village. Many of these people are still homeless.

All attempts to "harmonize" the historic problem of racism in America have ended up in a historical blind alley. Booker T. Washington attempted to "harmonize" a little over a hundred years ago by offering the "New South" a docile Black force "who without strikes labor your fields, clear your forest, build your railroads and cities." Black masses overruled it both by their militancy and their migrations, constantly fighting for freedom. No doubt this ceaseless movement of Black masses will overrule the "color-blind mentality" of Atlanta's mayors. But more importantly, how does a spark take a leap in Black thought to meet it and reveal its drive to transform the whole American society?

Editorial

Holbrooke shields Serb war criminals

The treacherous nature of the Dayton Agreement was once again revealed in the July 19 agreement which U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke signed with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, the architect of the campaign of "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia, and Radovan Karadzic, the self-styled president of the "Serb Republic" in Bosnia for whom the War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague has issued an arrest warrant. Faced with the bad image which Karadzic's participation in the upcoming NATO-backed elections in Bosnia was projecting to the world, the Clinton administration hurriedly asked Richard Holbrooke, the broker of the Dayton Agreement, to go to Belgrade and Zagreb to meet with Milosevic and Franjo Tudjman in order to remove Karadzic from the scene.

In the July 19 agreement, Karadzic resigned as head of the "Serb Democratic Party" and was replaced by Aleksa Buha, an equally murderous chauvinist Serb whose only difference from Karadzic is that he has not yet been indicted by the War Crimes Tribunal. Earlier Karadzic had already transferred presidential authority to his successor Biljana Plavsic in order to continue to wield power in the Serb nationalist-held part of Bosnia.

So shameful was this agreement that the president of the War Crimes Tribunal, Judge Antonio Cassese, had a public outburst in which he summed up the West's policy toward war criminals in the former Yugoslavia in the following words: "Go ahead, kill, torture, maim, commit acts of genocide... you may enjoy impunity." To date only seven of the 75 indicted war criminals from the former Yugoslavia are in the Tribunal's custody.

The latest agreement is in full continuity with the policy which the U.S. and other Western powers adopted toward Bosnia from the beginning of the Serbian government onslaught in 1992: collusion with the perpetrators of "ethnic cleansing" by imposing an arms embargo on Bosnia and by forcing the Bosnian government to accept a plan to divide the country along cultural and religious lines. Before the Dayton Agreement, the few instances of NATO's aerial bombings of Serb targets were aimed not at the reversal of "ethnic cleansing" but the defense of the West's credibility. Today, the stationing of 60,000 NATO troops in Bosnia including 20,000 U.S. troops, is in continuity with that aim.

The Sept. 14 projected elections in Bosnia are especially backed by Clinton's drive to project an image of himself as a "peacemaker" in the period preceding the No-

vember U.S. presidential elections. The Bosnian elections call for a three-member National Presidency to consist of a Muslim, a Serb and a Croat. They also call for a 42-member House of Representatives to consist of 14 members from the Bosnian "Serb Republic" and 28 members from the tenuous "Bosnian-Croat Federation."

These elections are a sham and a farce. First, they are based on the recognition of the "Serb Republic," a totally illegitimate entity which is the product of four years of Serb government-sponsored "ethnic cleansing" and mass rape. Second, there are several hundred thousand refugees of Muslim and mixed origin in Bosnia who cannot vote because they have been forced away from their towns. Third, those who are still defending the idea of a multicultural Bosnia are being attacked and persecuted by Serb and Croatian chauvinist forces as well the Bosnian government itself which by now has moved in the direction of Muslim exclusivism. The vicious beating on June 15 of Haris Silajdzic, the former Bosnian prime minister who is running on a multicultural platform, by goons from the Bosnian ruling party, attests to the retrogression within that government itself.

And yet the deep sentiments in defense of a multicultural existence continue to persist among many Bosnians. They were expressed in the statement made to a reporter by a gathering of Muslims, Serbs and Croats who had come to meet in the border town of Jezero: "You have to write it down that we want to live together like we did before." This message has continued to be expressed by people in Sarajevo, Tuzla and by Bosnian exiles who want to return to their homes to live together among Muslims, Serbs, Croats, Jews and Romanis.

Because this determination represents a beacon for the future and yet continues to be met with silence or rejection by the majority of the Left, News and Letters Committees has just published an expanded edition of *Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization'*, a book devoted to the perspective of universaliz-

ing the lessons of Bosnia's struggle.

Other analyses of Bosnia have correctly pointed out that the rise of narrow nationalism in the former Yugoslavia was made possible by the void in the articulation of an alternative to Communism and free market capitalism. That void allowed former Communist rulers to initiate a chauvinist and genocidal propaganda campaign against the Muslim and multicultural population in order to turn attention away from the deep crises of Yugoslav society. Bosnia-Herzegovina goes further than stating this problem. It recognizes that there is a new liberatory element in the Bosnian struggle for multiculturalism which has revolutionary implications that demand to be comprehended and developed.

This collection further projects a concept of a total uprooting of existing society based on a deeper exploration of Marx's Marxism and Marxist-Humanism as the ground for the creation of a truly classless, non-racist, non-sexist, non-homophobic and multiracial existence.

Bosnia-Herzegovina draws lessons from the Bosnian struggle for the U.S. where we face a Republican onslaught on people of color and the poor, the rise of racist militia groups, racist church burnings, bombings and the growing ideology of separatism. We invite you to order a copy and join us in a dialogue on how we can learn from the positive content of the Bosnian struggle and deepen the effort to fill the philosophic void in the Left.

U.S. harbors murderer

New York—Americans and Haitians demonstrated at the Federal building, July 29, to protest the Immigration and Naturalization Service's decision to allow "Toto" Constant, a notorious murderer, to live in peace in the U.S. The Haitian government wants him deported so he can be tried for his crimes—which include killing and torturing thousands of people as part of the former military government. But the U.S. is protecting him because he was on the payroll of the CIA and could reveal much about U.S. involvement in the bloody coup of 1991 and its aftermath. Constant managed to come here when the military government fell in 1994, and has recently been seen shopping and barbecuing on Long Island.

The demonstrators demanded that refugees be allowed in the U.S. and that Constant be deported. We also demanded that the U.S. return to the Haitian government 160,000 pages of documents the U.S. stole from the Haitian military and para-military organizations when it invaded the island. The documents undoubtedly prove U.S. complicity in crimes committed against the Haitian people.

—Protester

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
**MARXIST-HUMANIST
ARCHIVES**

(Continued from page 4)

'to lead,' but a frequent French translation is 'to drive.' The driver, the shepherd of the people no longer exists today. The people are no longer a herd; they do not need to be driven." Fanon's conclusion concretized his critique of the "Leader" and his cohorts who formed the dominant party: "The single party is the modern form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, unmasked, unpaired, unscrupulous and cynical" (*Wretched of the Earth*, p. 133). This led him to conclude: "The struggle for freedom does not give back to the national culture its former value and shapes..." (*Ibid.*, p. 197).

The year 1983, the Marx Centenary year, was marked by us, as Marxist-Humanists, with a national tour around the publication of a new work, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, that dealt with this whole question of nationalism and internationalism, philosophy and revolution, not only in general or related only to the decade of the 1980s, but related both to the new moments of Marx's last decade, which we had called a trail to our decade, and to the way great revolutionaries confronted historic turning points. It is this book which, in its final chapter, threw down the gauntlet to all post-Marx Marxists, declaring that they had not fully grasped Marx's "new moments."

Marx's view in his last decade, which revolved around the relationship to the West of what we now call the Third World, led him to declare that the revolution could come first in a so-called technologically backward land, ahead of technologically-developed Europe. Marx's deep dive—into pre-capitalist societies; into the fetishism of commodities in capitalist societies; and at the opposite pole into the "new passions and forces" that would aim, with the revolution, to abolish any division between manual and mental labor, in a word to create totally new human relations—had laid a trial for revolutionaries today.

This movement from practice has international support not only for its struggles but for its ideas—ideas that, as we have shown, Steve Biko found had a strong affinity to both Frantz Fanon and American Black thought. As Frantz Fanon put it: "Let us combine our muscles and our brains in a new direction... This new humanity cannot do otherwise than define a new humanism both for itself and for others."

Now that we do have both a Third World and a new generation of revolutionaries as Reason in the period in which we finally have Marx's writings of his last decade, and thus can grasp Marx's Marxism—not Engels', not Luxemburg's, not Lenin's but Marx's Marxism as a totality—it is up to our age to work out his "new Humanism."

Srebrenica commemoration

New York—Jews Against Genocide/N.Y. Committee to Save Bosnia sponsored a heart-wrenching rally, July 10, to mark the anniversary of the massacre of 8,000 men and boys in Srebrenica one year ago. Srebrenica was a so-called "safe haven," yet UN troops stood by while the Serbs killed all the men and boys they could.

Some 100 New Yorkers and Bosnians came out to remember and to demand that Karadzic and Mladic, the heads of the Serb aggressor state and army in Bosnia, be arrested and tried by the international court in The Hague for their war crimes. The two have been indicted, but Karadzic continues to run the Bosnian Serb government. Nothing has been done to bring them to trial even though the country is occupied by U.S. and NATO troops.

The rally had moving speeches about the war and so-called "peace" in Bosnia, but what struck me most was when the American speakers asked a man who survived Srebrenica to speak; another Bosnian became very agitated and after they discussed it among themselves, they decided he would not speak in public because it was too dangerous for his friends and relatives still in Bosnia. The murders continue today; the Dayton Accords are a farce. Only mass resistance inside and outside Bosnia can stop the genocide from resuming very soon.

Two years ago at demonstrations here we chanted, "Never again" (the slogan from the Holocaust) "means never again." Now we faced reality and chanted, "Never again is happening again." Is anyone listening? Or is the Left clinging to old agendas, to formulaic and vulgar concepts of socialism, while the emerging fascist face of world capitalism becomes acceptable, "inevitable"—because people see no alternative? —Anne Jaclard

Quebec in crisis

My vacation this July in Quebec was full of rude surprises. It's astonishing how much conditions have deteriorated in a year. My first hint was at the Plattsburgh Mall just before the border. Out of 48 shops, only about eight, mostly major chains, are still occupied. Quebecers once accounted for nearly half of the trade there.

In Quebec City the next day, I went to the Old Town. All of the first floor windows of the National Assembly were broken and boarded over. Hundreds of youth had rioted on the eve of June 24, St. John the Baptist Day, the official national holiday of French Canadians. According to the media, these were nationalist youth. At the Centre-Ville Mall, half of the stores were closed and most major ones were at half floor-space and inventory.

Almost all the radio talk shows are about unemployment and the situation is seen as desperate. It is officially at 11% unemployed, but most people speak of 25% among the youth. Most available jobs are dead-end and minimum wage. Many youth seem angry and bitter, where "bonne humeur" (good humor) was once the rule.

The economic crisis seems to be fueling the present wave of nationalism and not some sort of abstract national sentiment. But the present separatist Premier, Lucien Bouchard, is tail-ending the same austerity policies as the federal Canadian government and other world leaders under the new "free-market" world economy.

Canada as we know it may very well already be over. The Sweden-style social democracy which has characterized and given a unique shape to Canadian life for so many years, the glue which has held it together, is coming undone. I believe that serious social unrest is no longer just on the horizon but has arrived. The question now is: Can this unrest become a new beginning which can lead to the much-needed Canadian revolution?

—Former Montrealer

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New Immigrants enliven U.S. struggles and its contradictions

(Continued from page 1)

mary targets," Gutierrez said, "English-only is also a threat to Polish- and Italian-Americans, to Chinese- and Ukrainian-Americans."

We would have to go back to the Chinese Exclusion Acts of the 1880s, or to the National Origins Acts of 1921 and 1924, limiting the emigration of southern and eastern Europeans, to match such attacks on immigrants. Republican leaders and racist demagogues like Pat Buchanan feel it is great election year strategy to declare war on immigrants, just as war criminals Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia and Radovan Karadzic of the so-called "Serb Republic" in Bosnia found ethnic cleansing a great formula to gain state power. Clinton's collusion, however, is for the purpose of staying in power.

Immigration is both old and new in the U.S. To Mexicans, who have historically been a presence in the U.S. labor force since the period when the U.S. stole half of Mexico in 1848, and who traditionally crossed the border to work north of the Rio Grande, have been added Puerto Ricans, who have come to New York since the 1930s. Then came Dominicans, especially after President Johnson invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965 with 45,000 U.S. Marines.

It was Central Americans and Haitians who had to flee murderous, U.S.-backed, military regimes and CIA-contra terrorists in the 1980s. Jamaicans and other West Indians have long come to the U.S.; and Asians have a long history in the U.S. labor force, dating back to the 19th century when Chinese workers were forcibly brought here to build the railroads, only to be attacked by the American Federation of Labor. Since Europeans have ceased to be the major immigrant group, racism has become even more a part of anti-immigrant hysteria.

EXILED BY DESPERATION

What is also new is that over the last ten years or so hundreds of thousands of workers from further and further away in Latin America have had to make the dangerous, expensive, overland journey through Mexico, just to end up in the sweatshops of New York. Once here, they work for wages that have declined dramatically over the last decade.

They work two years to first pay off their debt to the money lenders and smugglers who financed their trip, then work two years more to buy a small plot of land back home, and work another year to build a small house for their families there. And yet another year is worked to save a little for the day they return to the families they were cruelly forced to leave behind. But under the neo-liberal economics of Latin America, begun by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, there is no hope of a job when they return home.

For these new immigrants from Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia, as well as Central America, there is no hope of eventually legalizing their work status. The 1986 Simpson-Mazzoli anti-immigrant law was never directed at employers hiring undocumented workers. Instead, it helped create a new class of permanently "illegal" workers who are more dependent on exploitative bosses who know their status, and who have used it to fuel an explosion of low-wage sweatshops since that law was passed.

Immigrant workers' associations have combatted this, from the Chinese Staff and Workers Association and the Latino Workers Center in New York, to the California Immigrant Workers Association.

Unlike previous generations of immigrants coming to New York, today's new immigrants have no hope of resettling their families here due to the starvation wages they make. Moreover, the distance, danger and expense of the journey to the U.S. mean that they cannot afford to be deported. To be deported before the debt to the "coyotes" is paid would mean a disaster of immeasurable proportion for the whole family. This has made organizing immigrant workers more dangerous and difficult.

Desperation is the one condition which has exiled immigrant workers from their native lands. According to one Ecuadoran worker's description of this desperate condition, "It is considered normal to eat meat only once a month, and for a whole family to live in one small room. People who come to inspect from the European Community don't even understand how the people are still alive. The number of calories consumed are not enough in their calculations to maintain life. There is at least 70% malnutrition among children. A child will have nothing but black coffee for breakfast, and faint in school. I refuse to let my son die of hunger."

Nevertheless, Latino immigrant labor is very complex, with its cultural and racial differences and histories. There are vibrant struggles within Latin America of indigenous peoples, as we saw in the Chiapas rebellion. The dialectics of race and class within Latin America enriches the ferment of ideas that immigrant workers bring with them to North America's labor movement

Welfare repeal

(Continued from page 1)

Capitalism can't bring people out of poverty; there aren't enough jobs; the jobs that do exist are poorly paid and getting worse, and over the last 20 years, 80% of U.S. workers saw their real wages fall.

Clinton and his Republican friends had best not forget why Roosevelt initiated New Deal legislation in the first place. It was to stop a revolution. Clinton's latest leap to the right can only help make revolution so compelling a drive that new forces for freedom will continue to arise. Our task is to take responsibility to help that idea of revolution develop and flourish.

and social struggles.

This is seen especially on the West Coast. It was the United Farm Workers (UFW) who pioneered a new kind of labor movement in the 1960s and '70s. While the old AFL-CIO bureaucrats were mired in business unionism, not even aware that they were losing the gains of the labor movement, the UFW showed what labor could be when it becomes a real movement. Having struggled with its own contradictions, the UFW has now started a organizing drive in California's strawberry fields.

In 1992, it was the drywall workers, almost all Mexican and Central American, who shut down all housing construction in California until they won their union. In 1995, it was the farmers, mostly Mexican, who organized themselves. Rank-and-file workers in both struggles were the ones who ran the strike. This meant that instead of the usual building trades strike with only a few workers picketing, hundreds of workers picketed a job site, and convinced other workers to join the strike.

Immigrant rank-and-file janitors in the Los Angeles Justice for Janitors campaigns put that struggle on the map with their militant tactics. With Los Angeles now the manufacturing capital of the U.S.—some 717,000 mostly immigrant workers work in its garment, plastics, textile, and food processing factories—labor organizers now hope to build on the successes of the new militancy of immigrant workers. This is especially so for LAMAP (Los Angeles Manufacturing Action Project), a "multi-union, area-wide organizing drive."

One of LAMAP's organizers is Joel Ochoa, from Chiapas, Mexico, who is also head of the southeast division of the California Immigrant Workers' Association. Ochoa says that "If you look at our experience, you see immigrants reaching out to unions much more than unions reaching out to immigrants. People are coming here from Mexico and all over Latin America with a tradition and culture that gives them a rich repertoire of tactics for fighting the companies." (See David Bacon, "How California's Immigrant Workers are Revitalizing Labor," in *The Village Voice*.)

It is with the aim of repressing this growing militancy of low-wage immigrant workers and polluting the minds of native-born workers against them that politicians like the neo-fascist Buchanan and the neo-neo-fascist governor of California Pete Wilson whipped up the anti-immigrant hysteria now raging in this country.

AUTHORITARIAN WELFARE STATE

With state and federal laws and agencies blocking the school house door, immigrant workers and their children truly are facing a Jim Crowism of the '90s. And because those coming to the U.S. are more and more the descendants of the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas, North, South and Central, it is both tragic and farcical to now hear the descendants of European immigrants tell them that they are the ones who are "illegal."

What is tragic and farcical is that while the new repressive anti-immigrant legislation makes it a crime for immigrants to work, the equally repressive Clinton-Republican welfare "reform," in effect, criminalizes poor native-born workers for the inability of this system to provide them jobs with a living wage.

Poor immigrant workers, under the new legislation, would be fined a ridiculous sum of \$500,000 and imprisoned for 15 years for using false I.D. to get a job; poor native-born workers, under welfare "reform," would be denied public assistance and their children impoverished further in order to force them into competition with im-

migrant workers for low wage, sweatshop jobs.

All the while, prisons continue to be built for those who can't get hired, 5000 border patrol agents get commissioned, and INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) detention space is expanded to 9000 beds for those immigrants caught trying to get a job. Under these laws, the working poor are damned if they do and damned if they don't.

Which is why, after the 1992 Los Angeles rebellion where Blacks and new Latino immigrants both rose up, the bourgeoisie struck back with the anti-immigrant Prop. 187. Their aim was to try to undermine the beginnings of that unity of Black and Latino in the streets by turning Black and white labor against immigrants. Then came the attack on affirmative action to try to turn white labor against both Blacks and immigrants.

The challenge before the labor movement is to attack these anti-immigrant laws as anti-worker. It means not being silent on Clinton's collusion with the anti-labor Republican-controlled Congress just because they finally raised the minimum wage as an attempt to head off the growing militancy of labor, especially rank-and-file low-wage workers.

Whether it's drywallers, farmworkers, garment and hotel workers, or truckers in the L.A. and Long Beach Harbors, or immigrant workers in the sweatshops of New York, new indignant demands of labor are being heard. Immigrant workers who have led strikes, insurgent movements, and factory occupations in Latin America's industries, and whose jobs were cut in the first round of neo-liberal restructuring, have brought that rich experience to today's labor struggles in the U.S.

EMIGRATION OF IDEAS

In New York's sweatshops, it's not unusual to meet students who have studied Marxism, who have worked in liberation theology base communities, and who know the realities of both the city and the countryside of the Third World. They are here now because either those forms of resistance and survival have dried up, or because neo-liberal economic policies have crushed their organizations.

However, the crisis is philosophic, as well as economic and political. As one Ecuadoran sweatshop worker in New York expresses it:

We were catechist youth [theology of liberation activists]. Many of our leaders were forced to emigrate by the economic crisis; they could no longer feed their families. But what had sustained us also was in crisis. Our slogan had been 'Yesterday Nicaragua, today El Salvador, this is the path for Ecuador.'

When Nicaragua returned to capitalism in 1990, it was like a light going out. This had been a revolution made with a large contribution by theology of liberation. What were our alternatives? In this crisis of the '90s, what ideology, what raft would save us? There was none. The left parties divided us. We saw killing without end in Peru and in Central America, and the false alternative of elections in Colombia.

The new immigration of the last 20 years has changed everything in the struggle for freedom in the U.S. In the complex multiethnic relations within immigrant communities, and between new immigrants and what has always been the touchstone of American civilization, its Black dimension, the challenge remains: how to work out so concrete and philosophic a mediation between these struggles that they not only speak to each other, but revolution itself becomes irresistible?

1996 is the 60th anniversary of

The Spanish Revolution

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"IT IS THAT ... EVENT WHICH ... BEGAN ALL QUESTIONS about what is a social revolution in relation to a new stage of objective development, and whether that was a higher stage than 1917. The fact that the workers were both at the point of production and very organized politically, raised the whole question of the unity of economics and politics in this stage of struggle against capitalism."

Presentation of Jan. 2, 1977

"AS FOR THOSE REVOLUTIONARY THEORETICIANS who did oppose the Stalinists and who had no illusions about the 'revolutionary nature' of the Popular Front in Government, they failed to create a new category from the spontaneous actions from below. That is, none thought that the way the Spanish workers occupied the factories during the very heat of the struggle against fascism disclosed a new dialectic of liberation, that that combination of economics and politics was the new form of workers' rule and must become the ground for new theory as well."

Philosophy and Revolution (1973, 1989), page 124

"THE DEPRESSION SIGNALLED THE END OF PRIVATE CAPITALISM while out of the Spanish Civil War there

emerged a new kind of revolutionary who posed questions not only against Stalinism but against Trotskyism, indeed against all established Marxists."

The Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World since World War II (1986), page 12

"SINCE THE SPANISH REVOLUTION OF [1936-37], the theoretical void has engulfed also the Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists who had ended up as part of the Government, which they had always theoretically disclaimed. What is far worse than becoming bound to Russia by gold payments was to become prisoners of administrative thinking."

Marxism and Freedom (1957, 1988), page 361

"WHETHER WE TAKE THE SPANISH REVOLUTION IN 1936-37, or the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, we find that the great outburst and new forms of organization with workers as decision-makers, with workers as Reason, went as spontaneously to search for the party as the party went to search for them. And even when they were anarchists, they gave in to the single party."

Notes of May 25, 1987, cited in The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism, p. xxiv

For information about THE RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA COLLECTION—MARXIST-HUMANISM: A HALF-CENTURY OF ITS WORLD DEVELOPMENT, or to order books where discussions on the Spanish Revolution are found, see literature ad on page 7.

Youth

Revolutionary subjectivity in the '90s

by Maya Jhansi

At a recent meeting I attended, several youth spoke about the need for us, as a new generation of revolutionaries, to assess the legacy left by the great movements of the 1960s and 1970s. For us, this legacy has a two-fold character: on the one hand, the 1960s represents a time when masses of people took things into their own hands and believed that revolution was possible; on the other hand, the 1960s represents a moment of failure that has infected ongoing struggles with a pervasive cynicism about the possibility of actual freedom.

Today, the struggle goes on and the fact that there are youth whose imaginations are fired by the history of past movements shows that the revolutionary movement, for all the attempts to subsume it ideologically and contain it through imprisonment and coercion, is ongoing and continuous. As a young Black Panther recently put it: "The fact that we exist today shows, as Fred Hampton put it, that 'you can kill a revolutionary but you can't kill the revolution.'"

Though we are not living in the '60s, when the rebellions were massive and visible, we are witness to the continuity of youth's rejection of capitalist society, its values and its culture.

Indeed, it is this continuity of revolutionary struggle that a recent book by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, called *Labor of Dionysus: A Critique of the State-Form* (1994), has caught. This book is important because it directly challenges the notion that the revolutionary subject is dead, that the age of computerization has subsumed the human subject of revolt.

This book reprints some of Negri's speeches and writings of the 1960s and 1970s which show how the capitalist state consolidates itself in response to the struggles of the working class. This reprinting is in itself an important act and shows the attempt to continue those movements today.

Their project is to work out a Marxist critique of the authoritarian, postmodern state: "The Marxist critique of the State," they argue, "must grasp the real social forces in motion that sabotage and subvert mechanisms of rule. At the base of this critique, we assume, as Marx did, the idea and the experience of living labor, always subjugated but always 'liberating itself.'"

For Negri and Hardt, the subject, living labor, is never fully contained in the equilibrium that would consolidate the hegemony of capital. Living labor continues to deliver blows to the system by escaping the dominion of capital as in the movements of the 1960s. Indeed, the continuous movement of living labor has now so weakened the system, they argue, that democracy and freedom are, for the first time, actually possible.

Because capitalist development today has moved towards hi-tech production, a new type of subjectivity has emerged: a hybrid subjectivity of man and the machine which can't be organized by the labor process. This subjectivity is a collective and cooperative one, organized independently of capitalist command. Computerization and restructuring only further frees this subjectivity from capital's control: "The new era of the organization of capitalist production and reproduction of society is dominated by the emergence of the laboring subjectivity that claims its mass autonomy, its own independent capacity of collective valorization, that is, its self-valorization with respect to capital."

This hybrid subjectivity challenges the class division of mental and manual labor and creates a Spinozian "multitude"—the true subjects of an absolute democracy. This new multitude strips away the "socialist illusion." Their freedom is ontological—that is, freedom exists because they exist. By ontologizing the liberation of the new subject, Negri and Hardt seek to move beyond the notion of sporadic and contingent mass movements.

Negri and Hardt surrender the Idea of Socialism to what they call the "real socialism" of the East and West (i.e. state-capitalism). They reject any notion of what they call a "transcendental solution" and counterpose the power of living labor to the Idea of Freedom as an idea. Living labor finds in "the immanence and the immediacy of its logics the force to develop itself."

In other words, for Negri and Hardt, freedom is imme-

diate, spontaneous and untheorized. Once freedom is theorized, it becomes a tool of state co-optation. Here philosophy is seen as an opposite to the subjects of revolt that manifest actual freedom. Thus, though Negri and Hardt argue for the importance of Marxism, it is not as philosophy but as part of the ongoing practical critique of living labor itself.

In today's reality of competing ideologies and retrogressive ideas, this vision of a spontaneous and necessarily democratic multitude is utopian at best and possibly defeatist at worst. What they ignore is the reality of counter-revolution emerging from within the revolution.

It seems to me that today we can't leave concepts like "freedom" and "liberation" untheorized. We have to assume philosophic responsibility for these ideas from the very beginning to ensure that the direction and goal of the revolution is truly revolutionary.

We've seen movements as great as those of the '60s rise and collapse; we've seen successful revolutions (as in Russia in 1917, Africa in the 1950s and 1960s) transform into tyrannies and dictatorships; how can we assume with faith that a new mass, spontaneous uprising, as in the 1960s, will automatically engender the new society? It did not then—we are living proof of that. Why would it today?

The capitalist invention of the 'white race'

Editor's note: The following discussion article represents the theoretical position of activists who have been involved in the formation of a new Black Panther Party on Chicago's South Side. We invite dialogue on this.

The fate of the white working class has always been bound with the condition of Black workers. Going as far back as the American Colonial period when Black labor was first imported into America, Black slaves and indentured servants were oppressed right along with whites of the lower classes. But when European indentured servants joined with Blacks to rebel against their lot in the late 1600s, the propertied class decided to "free" them and give them special status as "whites" and thus a stake in the system of oppression.

Material incentives, as well as the newly elevated social status, were used to enlist their allegiance. This invention of the "white race" and racial slavery of the Africans went hand-in-glove, and is how the upper classes maintained order during the period of slavery. Even poor whites had aspirations of doing better since their social mobility was ensured by the new system. This social mobility, however, was on the backs of the African slaves who were super-exploited.

But the die had been cast for the dual-tier form of labor, which exploited the African, but which also trapped white labor. When they sought to organize unions for higher wages in the North and South, they were slapped down by the rich who used enslaved Black labor in their primary mode of production. The so-called "free" labor of the white worker did not stand a chance.

Although the capitalists used the system of white skin privilege to great effect to divide the working class, the truth is that they only favored white workers to use them against their own interests, not because there was true "white" class unity. They just didn't want them united with the Blacks against their rule and the system of exploitation of labor.

The invention of the "white race" was a scam to facilitate this. White workers were bought off to perpetuate their own wage slavery and the Africans' super-exploitation. They struck a deal with the devil, which has hampered all efforts at class unity for the last four centuries.

This division ultimately undercuts the living standards of all workers. Moreover, by pitting whites against Blacks and other oppressed nationalities, the capitalist class is able to prevent workers from uniting against their common class enemy. As long as workers are fighting each other, capitalist class rule is secure.

If an effective resistance is to be mounted against the current racist offensive of the capitalist class, the utmost solidarity between workers of all races is essential. The way to defeat the capitalist strategy is for white workers

Paris student protest



Students at the University of Paris demonstrated July 19 because, according to one of the protesters, "There is no room for some students in our universities. We are very numerous but the number of slots is small. The number of universities has remained the same but the number of students has doubled in ten years."

Essay Article

(Continued from page 5)

between party and spontaneity. Endless tinkering with the form of either or both has not succeeded in showing a way out of the failed and soured revolutions of our age. It has not led any further than where Lenin himself went.

Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism shows powerfully how, even in the midst of his most serious writings of 1917-18, committed to the radical grassroots democracy of the soviets, Lenin never abandoned his commitment to the vanguard party, which "reemerged forcefully once the world revolution no longer seemed on the horizon."

Anderson then asks a series of questions that reveal deep contradictions in Lenin's thought on organization. He shows that the concept of vanguard party, which Lenin kept in a "separate compartment" from his dialectical rethinking, in many respects "came to predominate over the other features of his Marxism after 1918."

It is one thing for Lenin in 1914 to get no further. But why, in 1996, after all the aborted revolutions, should we stop at Practice just because we denote it as Party? Don't today's realities demand far deeper rethinking? If, as Friedman argues, the Bolsheviks lacked an adequate concept of democracy after the revolution, don't we have to question both that Party form and the utter lack of any projection by today's revolutionaries of a new relationship between theory and practice?

Anderson makes a cogent case that the crises of our times call for a new return to Hegel's dialectic that bases itself on a comprehension of Lenin's achievements and at the same time does not stop at the barriers Lenin could not overcome. Above all, that means we need to go directly into Hegel's Absolutes and rethink organization as well on that philosophic foundation. Nothing could be more urgent than to pick up the trail of Dunayevskaya's 1986-87 work on the dialectics of organization and philosophy. Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism points us in that direction.

Ethnic cleansing in Sudan

(Continued from page 8)

phemistically called "peace villages." The men are separated from the women and children. Summary executions, torture, forced conversion to Islam, slave labor, and starvation are daily occurrences. Is this the Final Solution for the Nuba?

"There is no doubt that genocide is being committed in the Nuba mountains," said Alex de Waal, co-director of London based African Rights. "It is unlikely that Nuba civilization, as it has been known, will ever exist again unless something is done very, very soon."

Despite the denials by the chimera of Black nationalism, Louis Farrakhan, the slavery and genocide have not gone unchallenged in the U.S. Several abolitionist organizations have sprouted up among the weeds of retrogression. Among them are Coalition Against Slavery In Mauritania And Sudan (CASMAS), the American Anti-Slavery Group (AASG), the Pax Sudani Network and the Zumbi Society.

5. Alex de Waal, "Facing Genocide: The Nuba of Sudan," *Africa Research Bulletin*, July 1995, p. 11927.

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**Women's
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David Turnley photo

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— GLORIA I. JOSEPH,
author of *Common Differences*

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The sudden outbreak of violent demonstrations in the heart of Jakarta on July 27 put the world on notice that tensions in Indonesia have reached the boiling point. When government forces raided the opposition Indonesian Democratic Party (IDP) in the early morning hours, hundreds of youth and worker activists were ready in the streets surrounding the party offices. As they began to battle police, they were joined by thousands more from the nearby slums.

Caught unprepared by the scope and depth of resistance, it took police and the military until the end of the day to regain control. By that time, five commercial office buildings and the headquarters of the Department of Agriculture had been burned down, and up to seven people lay dead. In the next few days, police detailed hundreds of opposition activists, including labor leader Muchtar Pakpahan. Police armed with M-16 rifles are now patrolling the streets of Jakarta, and a top general has openly threatened to kill any who dare challenge the government on the streets.

While to some extent spontaneous in nature, the July 27 events were more than an elemental burst of mass anger. Many of the slogans shouted by demonstrators had a directly political character. Some people called out the name of IDP leader Megawati Sukarnoputri, the daughter of Sukarno who ruled Indonesia from independence in 1949 until 1965.

In recent months, Sukarnoputri has begun to speak out forcefully against the three decades old Suharto military dictatorship, transforming a tame, merely symbolic opposition party into a pole of attraction for many groups already discontented with the system. A few

Hunger strikes in Turkey

After 12 deaths prompted international protests, the Turkish government has partially ceded to hunger strikers in the nation's prisons. For 69 days, hundreds of leftist political prisoners had refused food in order to protest the sending of prisoners to remote locations, far from their lawyers, families, and comrades. There are today, 8,000 political prisoners in Turkey, most of them accused of membership in banned Marxist-Leninist or Kurdish organizations.

The current Turkish government, installed in late June, is led by an avowed Islamic fundamentalist, Necmettin Erbakan of the Welfare Party. The fundamentalists got into power due to a deal with Tansu Ciller, a conservative leader who is hoping to stave off corruption charges against her.

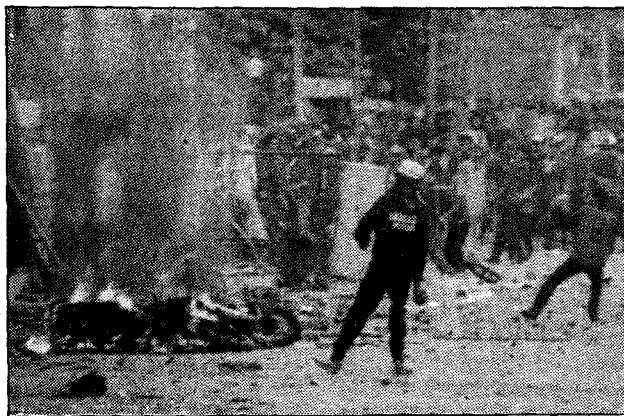
In some ways, the fact that Erbakan reached a type of compromise with the hunger strikers which the previous secular government had opposed, is an ominous sign. This is true despite the fact that so many lives were saved in what was at least a small victory for the Left.

For years, many Turkish leftists and intellectuals have posed their criticisms of Turkey's authoritarian, military-dominated political structure in so narrow a way that all opponents of the centralized state, including the fundamentalists, have been viewed as "democratic forces." The new agreement on the prisons may strengthen support for a tacit alliance between the Left and the fundamentalists, something which would be tragic for Turkey's future.

Indonesia: Behind the clashes in Jakarta

weeks ago, the Suharto regime orchestrated a heavy-handed vote by a faction of the IDP to depose Sukarnoputri from her leadership position.

Other slogans shouted by demonstrators on July 27 attacked the military directly and pointed to government repression, not only of the majority population, but also of oppressed nationalities such as the East Timorese or the indigenous people of Irian Jaya. Sukarnoputri and



her co-leaders seemed as stunned by the militancy of the demonstrations as was the government. But it did not come as a surprise to exiled East Timorese revolutionaries, who have been predicting serious outbreaks by the Indonesian people against Suharto for months.

In recent years, Indonesia has experienced a rapid increase in its gross domestic product, an influx of foreign investment, and the growth of a fairly large working class. At the same time, the minimum wage is only \$3 per day and genuine trade unions and strikes are banned. Many international electronics corporations use female labor from rural areas in assembly plants. They confine these workers to barracks behind high fences and keep them employed for only two or three years. By then, their eyesight having deteriorated, they are sent back to their villages.

These exploitative conditions have meant superprofits for multinationals such as AT&T, Thomson, Panasonic, and of course, the ubiquitous Nike shoe corporation. In the past few years, these conditions have gained international attention as a result of support campaigns for Indonesian workers waged by labor, women's and human rights groups in the industrially developed world.

Three weeks before the clashes in Jakarta, 20,000 workers demonstrated in the country's second largest city, Surabaya, demanding that the minimum wage be raised to \$4 per day. The response by the government was an attack by the military and police which prevented a planned protest march from taking place. Thirty worker and student activists were arrested. Today, Dita Sari, the 26-year-old woman who is president of the Indonesian Center for Labor Studies, peasant activist Coen Hussein Ponto, and other labor leaders still languish in jail.

Now that the most serious cracks since the 1960s have appeared in the Suharto regime, it should also be recalled that Indonesia has a very long revolutionary history in this century. That history stretches from the founding of a mass socialist movement during the colo-

nial period by the Dutch revolutionary Henk Sneevliet, to the embrace by Sneevliet and the Javanese revolutionary leader Tan Malaka of Lenin's theses on national liberation as well as their later opposition to the Stalinization of the world Communist movement.

Finally, there is the history in the 1950s and 1960s of the by then Maoist-Stalinist Indonesian Communist Party, whose leadership followed Sukarno uncritically at every turn, including his banning of independent Marxist groups. These opportunist policies brought the Communists not state power but physical destruction in the massacres which followed the 1965 military coup. With the help of lists furnished by the CIA, Suharto and his colleagues murdered 500,000 Communists and their supporters, all the while appealing to Islam against "atheistic Communism." (For an analysis, see Raya Dunayevskaya, "Indonesian Communism: A Case of World Communism's Decomposition," *News & Letters*, October and November 1965.)

Coup in Burundi

The July 14 coup which brought Major Pierre Buyoya to power is but the latest in a series of political convulsions in the Burundian state since 1993. During that same period, a slow motion genocide has resulted in the deaths of 150,000 children, women, and men.

Here, in a mirror image of neighboring Rwanda, the Tutsi minority has held onto power since independence, lording it over the majority Hutu. Buyoya first came to power in 1987. Less openly racist than previous leaders, he agreed under strong international pressure to democratize the country. In 1993 he lost an election to Melchior Ndadaye, a Hutu committed to a multiethnic society, and ceded power. But Ndadaye was soon killed by reactionaries within the nearly all-Tutsi military.

Since then, the government has been nominally multiethnic, but in fact the military has done what it wanted. Again and again, it has staged indiscriminate massacres of Hutu, also driving most of them out of the capital last year. In the countryside, Hutu extremists with an equally racist ideology have been slaughtering Tutsi civilians. During this period, the UN has debated sending in peacekeepers, but has done nothing. Not only Western powers, but also Nelson Mandela of South Africa have refused to become involved.

Today Buyoya promises ethnic reconciliation, as did the previous government, but it is doubtful that, even if he wanted to, he could control the perpetrators of genocide in the military.

Northern Ireland violence

After five days of intimidation and complaints by Protestant militants in Northern Ireland, the pro-British police force, itself 93% Protestant, in the end allowed a provocative and triumphalist annual Protestant demonstration to take place once again. As in the past, strong police barricades shielded them from the wrath of the local population.

The result was the most severe mass street violence in Northern Ireland in two decades, as several thousand pro-Irish Republican Army (IRA) demonstrators battled police with molotov cocktails for two nights in Derry. Unlike with the Protestant rioters of a few days earlier, these protesters were met with real force, resulting in the death of one of their number, Dermot McShane. The next day, 10,000 marched through riot-damaged streets for McShane's funeral.

While peace negotiations limp on, the IRA is still not even invited to the table. Given British and Protestant intransigence toward the Catholic minority of Northern Ireland, who constitute 45% of the population and yet are shut out of all meaningful political power, and given the militaristic bent of the IRA leaders, the rekindling of outright civil war has become a real possibility.

Dublin, Ireland—What set off the latest round of troubles in Northern Ireland is that the Portadown Orange Lodge, a Protestant Unionist group, insisted on parading through a Catholic neighborhood in Belfast on the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne, which is celebrated in blatant sectarian fashion as a triumph of Protestants over Catholics.

The march was planned along the Garvaghy Road. The Garvaghy Road Residents' Association opposed this, demanding that the march should be re-routed elsewhere.

Sir Hugh Annesley, the Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), at first decided that the march must be diverted, and a RUC roadblock was set up at Drumcree. While a tense stand-off developed between police and Orangemen at Drumcree, across the province Orangemen set up road blocks. In Belfast, some Catholics were driven from their homes by sectarian gangs. A Catholic taxi driver was murdered.

With an Orange insurrection looming, Annesley abruptly reversed policy, and ordered the RUC to clear a route for the Orange march along the Garvaghy Road. A non-violent sit-down protest by nationalists was broken up quite brutally; television showed people bruised and bleeding after being clubbed.

Then came the terrorist bomb attack on a hotel in Enniskillen where a wedding reception was being held. This too was evidently a sectarian attack targeting Protestants. A warning was given, and luckily no one was killed—the last person got out 90 seconds before the blast. The IRA denied involvement and no group has claimed responsibility.

—Richard Bunting

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973); and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the *Constitution of News and Letters Committees*.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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25¢

The Middle East in full disarray

Israel-Palestine eruption

by Peter Wermuth

The revolt which erupted in the West Bank and Gaza Strip on Sept. 25 by Palestinians opposing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's efforts to torpedo the peace process has created a seismic shift in the region, by revealing the chasm dividing the rulers from the ruled in the Palestinian and Israeli communities.

What precipitated the revolt was Netanyahu's insistence on opening a tourist tunnel close to Al Aksa Mosque, the most important Moslem shrine in Jerusalem. Though the thought of Jewish tourists spilling into the Moslem Quarter guarded by Israeli soldiers was surely enough of an affront to spark a major incident, the revolt was about far more than the opening of the tunnel. It rather represented a response to years of pent-up rage over hopelessly deteriorating living conditions (as seen in the 75% rate of unemployment in the Gaza Strip) and an Israeli government bent on subverting the Oslo peace accords.

In total defiance of those accords, Netanyahu has stalled on withdrawing Israeli troops from Hebron, prevented Palestinians from traveling between Gaza and the West Bank, and refused to release Palestinian political prisoners. Ariel Sharon, a member of his cabinet, declared on the very day of the tunnel opening that the government will "vastly expand" Jewish settlements in the Golan Heights and West Bank. Most important of all, Netanyahu has tried to lay total claim to Jerusalem, whose status according to the Oslo accords is not to be decided until 1999.

To assert Israeli control over the Arab part of the city, he had earlier closed the office of a Palestinian councillor and bulldozed an Arab youth center. The tunnel was opened for the same purpose. As he brashly stated, "I do not regret that we opened the tunnel, as it expressed our sovereignty over Jerusalem."

The Palestinian masses understood that these moves



Palestinian youth atop captured Israeli watchtower in Nablus, West Bank.

were meant to kill off any move toward an eventual Palestinian state, and took immediate action. In Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nablus, Bethlehem, the Gaza Strip and other

(Continued on page 8)

Betrayal and confrontation in Kurdistan and Iraq

by Kevin A. Barry

Although the events in and around Jerusalem have crowded news about Iraq out of the headlines, the tragedy in Iraq will continue to have great impact on the struggle for human liberation in the Middle East as a whole. Saddam Hussein's sudden dispatch on Aug. 30 of thousands of heavily armed soldiers into Erbil, a major city inside the United Nations-protected Kurdish enclave in northern Iraq, sent thousands of Kurds and Arab oppositionists fleeing toward the Iranian and Turkish borders.

This time, as against Saddam's genocidal attacks in 1988 or 1991, the biggest shocker was that Massoud Barzani, leader of the most important and oldest Kurdish liberation movement, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), had actually invited the Iraqi army in. Barzani did so, he said, in order to undercut his rival, Jalal Talabani of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), who had been receiving aid from Iran.

Saying he was punishing Saddam's "aggression," U.S. President Bill Clinton carried out two attacks against Iraq's air defense system, launching a total of 44 cruise missiles (at a cost of \$1.2 million apiece). But these U.S. attacks were in the South, nearer to oil-rich Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and nowhere near Kurdistan in the North where the fighting was taking place.

Beneath the diplomatic language about "strategic" U.S. interests in the South, and merely "humanitarian" ones in the North, was a cold and brutal truth of the type which we have also witnessed in Bosnia: The world's remaining superpower will tolerate and even abet genocide so long as the perpetrators of that geno-

(Continued on page 9)

Black World

Sudan: the famine of ideas



Editor's note: This month I am turning over my column to Robert Reed to continue the analysis of the crisis and contradictions in the Sudan he began in last month's N&L. We will print the rest of his essay in future issues.—Lou Turner

There is a man. He is a farmer. He is starving to death. Drought has destroyed his crops, rats have eaten his grains and thieves have pilfered his seeds. He has nothing. His stomach twists in knots. In utter desperation, he cuts off one of his own fingers and eats it. He lives a little longer. But hunger keeps clawing his insides. So he slices off another finger and a toe and devours them too. He continued to cannibalize himself, chopping and chewing—fingers, toes, a hand a foot...

This starving man is the Sudan. It teeters perilously close to the edge of extinction. A collapsing economy; forty years of war; the re-emergence of the slave trade; an Orwellian military dictatorship; messianic fundamentalists set to Islamicize "all of Africa" no matter the cost in lives; over one million Nuba forced into concentration camps called "peace villages"; and a splintered liberation movement bogged down in internecine carnage: these are the bleeding abscesses of the Sudan.

To comprehend the anemic condition of Sudan it is necessary to examine the violent contradictions within it. And that is where we turn.

The tragedy of the Sudan arises clearly from the unpreparedness of the Arab educated classes. Instead of national consciousness being the all embracing crystallization of the innermost hopes of all Sudanese, instead of being the immediate and most obvious result of the mo-

(Continued on page 9)

Seven-year fight wins Hood Furniture contract

Jackson, Miss.—"Warren Hood said he would never sign a contract with Furniture Workers Local 282. He spread rumors that he would close the Hood Furniture plant down before he agreed that Willie Rudd, the president of Local 282, could be our representative. We had to fight for seven years for justice. But on Friday night, Sept. 20, at 11:00, Hood Furniture signed a one-year contract with Local 282. It was a day I will remember all my life," said Lurlee Lewis, chief steward and a production worker at Hood.

"We worked in the plant all day," Lewis said. "And then the negotiations started up again after work. The whole negotiating committee came. We had Willie Rudd and Aletha Baptist from the Local headquarters there, and many of the same workers who have been fighting this struggle for years: James Green, Jesse Jones, Andrew Miggins, Regina Sim, Melvin Gray, Fannie Williams, Barbara Hamilton, Dorothy Jackson, George Williams—I can't call all the names now, but we were all there. We voted to authorize a strike, and we told the community to be ready for a strike. But they finally signed the contract. To me, the greatest thing was that this was not a contract negotiated in Washington; it was a contract negotiated by Hood workers. They finally recognized Local 282 as the bargaining agent."

One of the longest-running struggles for union recognition ever fought in the South began in January 1989, when some 350 Hood Furniture workers, nearly all Black, voted to be represented by Local 282 of the Furniture Workers, a division of IUE. From 1989 to 1993 they tried to negotiate a contract with Warren Hood, one of the most powerful men in Mississippi and major stockholder in Deposit Guaranty Bank, the state's largest. Even a national boycott of Hood by the AFL-CIO, the NAACP and Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) didn't force Hood to negotiate in good faith.

'SLAVE CONTRACT'

Then in July 1993, Hood met in Washington, D.C. with IUE International President William Bywater and secretly negotiated what workers called a "slave contract," assigning Hood workers to a local they had never voted for, IUE Local 797. At a ratification meeting, only 14 workers voted for the contract; 250 workers were barred from the meeting for refusing to sign cards switching their membership from Local 282 to 797.

For the next three years, the rank-and-file workers' organization at Hood stood their ground. "They thought they had us beaten," Lurlee Lewis remembered. "The Jackson Advocate and News & Letters—you were the only ones writing about what we were going through. We

kept our own organization even then. We printed up T-shirts saying, 'Don't Blame Me, I Didn't Vote For It. Member of Local 282.' They never got more than 20 workers to go over to their side, out of the whole plant. Finally the IUE saw it wouldn't get any dues money unless they let us have the representation we chose."

(Continued on page 3)

Management lacks grip on reality



by B. Ann Lastelle

Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S., declared: "Our epoch is the epoch of the struggle for the minds of men." It is the workers' minds—not simply our technical knowledge or our problem-solving skills, but our attitude to objectivity—that the capitalist bosses seek to influence.

Our supervisors' boss, Don Reed, met with the first and second shifts together. He said that Unilever, which purchased Helene Curtis in March, is interested in only one thing—profit. (Surprise!) A Unilever analysis found that it costs Helene Curtis 22¢ more per case to bottle shampoo than it costs other Unilever facilities. A dark cloud is hanging over that unit, he said, and it's up to us to keep it from heading in our direction.

He had determined that we need to produce over 20% more canisters of anti-perspirant per shift in order to satisfy Unilever. Too many of us, he said, come to work solely for the paycheck; too many think this is just a job. A simple change in our attitude would result in an immediate 15% improvement. He knows that there are problems with the equipment, but those are being addressed. The main problem, he said, is that we have resigned ourselves to failure; we have accepted defeat.

That night the grit in the solution burst hoses and clogged nozzles on the filler. The line was down for three and a half hours. One worker joked, "Well, Don, it didn't work out quite like you said." A pin in the filler broke two days later. It was down for another two and a half hours. To think that a change in our attitude would make a difference defies both experience and logic.

When all of the machines on our automated line are

(Continued on page 3)

ON THE INSIDE

From The Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya •
Althusser's anti-Hegelianism page 4
Essay • Subjective barriers within
socialization of labor today page 5
Editorial • 'Defense of Marriage':
election year fraud page 10

Ebert denounces Ludic Feminism review

*Editor's note: Below we print excerpts from Teresa Ebert's response to Laurie Cashdan's critique of her recent book, **Ludic Feminism and After**, in the last issue of **News & Letters**. Cashdan's response will appear in November. We invite other readers to respond to this dialogue as well.*

In her review of my book, **Ludic Feminism and After: Postmodernity, Desire and Labor in Late Capitalism** (**News & Letters**, August-September 1996, p. 2), Laurie Cashdan provides a general mapping of the contemporary theoretical and political positions and the place of **Ludic Feminism**. She also helps to clarify some of the major areas in contestation in recent theory. For example, is gender an intersubjective cultural performance (semi)autonomous from "economics" and "class" as post-al theorists claim and as she also asserts (her formal disclaimers notwithstanding)? Or is gender always an articulation of the mode of production—the "economic"—as I have argued?

In her political "evaluation" of these contestations and differences, however, she has managed to name my theory of materialism "regressive" only by resorting to some reactionary but quite familiar moves common to all bourgeois criticism of revolutionary Marxist practices. Like all bourgeois writers before her, she begins her marginalization of revolutionary Marxism by inventing multiple "Marxs" ("to which Marx will we return?").

She, thereby, produces a cultural Marx, placing "human relations"—as if these are autonomous—at the center of his work rather than the material and historical practices that structure those relations. Individuals, for Marx, always participate in all their relations inevitably as "bearers [Träger] of particular class-relations and interests" (*Capital*, Vol. 1, p. 92). But Cashdan repeats, in her review, the same rehearsed maneuvers to marginalize "economics" that, for example, Sartre performed in his own well-known essay on materialism...

Cashdan rejects revolutionary Marxism as "regressive" and produces a cultural "marxism" (through a convenient "reading" of the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, one that marginalizes *Capital* as positivistic) in order to put the "individual" at the center of social practices. The maneuver itself comes down to a displacement and a reversal: an "idea" (in Cashdan's case Hegelian and not Engelsian "dialectics") is put in place of the actuality of the "mode of production" ("economic"), and, through the magic of the subject's "creativity," a marxism without Marx is invented and a "revolution" is announced!

In her re-writing of "Marxism" as "marxism"—a theory that has at its center not the material in history (the structure of class conflicts) but a philosophical method ("dialectics")—she makes the most un-dialectical moves.

Although this maneuver is itself performed (as in all idealist dismissals of materialism) under the guise of an epistemological critique, its aim, like all ideological moves, is political: it attempts to restore the individual as the center of social practices.

Cashdan, like Sartre, does this by appealing to the innate creativity of the subject: a creativity that allows the subject to produce a world different from the one in which she is situated not through any "revolutionary praxis" but simply by an act of re-cognition—what Rorty

and other liberal pragmatists now call "redescription." Social change, in this bourgeois narrative, is not the effect of the transformation of objective world-historical practices (the exploitation of labor) by class struggle but a result of the spontaneous "self-development of subjectivity"...

Cashdan attacks my materialism as "regressive" because my book insists that, although cultural and social issues are important, putting them at the center of social practices and treating them as (semi-)autonomous (as she does) is a diversion from economic inequality—the inequality that capitalist propaganda attempts to obscure. The function of revolutionary critique is to demystify such propaganda—not to reinforce it through uncritical readings of Hegel and other idealist theorists or by sentimentalizing "human relations"...

Revisionary readings of Marxist theory are common maneuvers to marginalize the revolutionary and the materialist... Following the lessons of critics such as K. Anderson (whose book is favorably reviewed in the same issue of **News & Letters**), Cashdan claims that Lenin's reading of Hegel's *Science of Logic* is a self-revision. This is, of course, not the case: there... is no "break" between Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* and his reading of the *Science of Logic*. In fact, this obstinate consistency resists Anderson's normalizing attempts to re-write Lenin. It finally leads Anderson to declare Lenin's approach to Hegel is ambivalent and his reading of him "one-sided" because Lenin insists on historical "materialism" against Hegel's panhistorical "idealism."

Anderson is using "one-sided" here in the same way that Cashdan uses "regressive": to discredit the neces-

(Continued on page 11)



Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Clerical workers at New York's Barnard College, Sept. 16, ended one of the longest strikes at a U.S. college — five months — with support by many professors and students. Called "a nice victory for labor" by one woman striker, the new contract gives the 164 workers fully paid health care by the carrier of their choice and a 9.5% pay raise over the next three years.

Twelve hours after Sarah Balabagan flew home to the Philippines to a tumultuous welcome last August, after worldwide outrage saved her from execution for killing her rapist employer in the United Arab Emirates, another Filipina domestic worker flew home in a coffin. The body of 26-year-old Elisa Salem — covered with bruises, swellings and abrasions — arrived days after her letter to her parents describing horrible physical abuse by her Jordanian woman employer. The French organization Secours-Philippines is demanding an investigation.

— Information from **Women Living Under Muslim Laws**

In late August, women in Liberia took to the streets once again to protest the civil war in which 150,000 have died. Shouting "Women can do it," hundreds went to the airport to celebrate the appointment of Ruth Sando Perry as interim president and to call for an end to this reactionary war.

Reading Dunayevskaya in the 1990s

As we confront the current crises in U.S. feminism in our postmovement era, its consistent inability to connect, address, and represent the hopes, needs, and interests of all its constituents, it would certainly seem odd to some to return to Raya Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution*. But I did. And I believe that all feminists and potential feminists sincerely committed to undoing retrogressive public policies which have led to the feminization of poverty, reforms in welfare that pummel the poor, and full-scale attacks on the gains of people of color and women under affirmative action will take in Dunayevskaya's analyses like breaths in fresh and revolutionary air.

The pitfalls of our postmodern feminist consciousness are manifold. By way of Sojourner Truth, Dunayevskaya characterizes them in a word: "shortminded." In our placing limits on our freedom, we have passively and gratefully accepted "gains," "improvements," and "progress" in our respective individual or class lots. In effect, this narrow vision has allowed some women to fare better than and exploit "others"—poor and working-class women whose faces are of various hues.

We have settled for reforms, rather than revolution, "revolution in permanence," as Dunayevskaya advocates. Among feminist scholars, we speak to, for, and about women. We theorize as a form of practice, rather than cogently move from "theory as practice and practice as theory." We have equally fallen prey to a vanguardism, a top down, rather than bottom up, philosophy of social, economic, and political change that marginalizes the lived experiences of our larger constituency for those of the privileged few.

And in this postmovement, postmodern era, our desire to create an exclusively feminist politics of resistance has resulted in our excision and exorcism (like demons) rather than integration of male theorists of oppression and revolution like Fanon and Marx simply because of their maleness and/or perceived "masculinist" writings.

Dunayevskaya's feminism is inclusive; it is revolutionary and integrative in its insights. As an *engage*, an ac-

Ecuadoran child support

Cuenca, Ecuador—When we go to the government office that is supposed to collect our child support, we often get nothing, and we are yelled at by the officials. The officials are paid off by the men, or are sympathetic to them, or just lazy. The central government investigated the offices in our province, Azuay, but nothing changed. We have formed an organization to fight for our rights. We want those officials fired, and we want to reform the Court for Minors. Here are our stories:

Woman 1: I was supposed to get 20,000 sucres (about \$7) a month for my child. For 15 months, I got nothing. The official collected it from the father, but I



didn't get it. Every time I went to the office, they told me the official wasn't in and that I couldn't get the money from anyone but him. I was in trouble when the child had to go to a doctor.

It's the same story all the time: machismo. And if you don't tip the official, you don't get anything. Yet these same officials are quick to sign the papers to send children out of the country for adoption. I had to go to court to get my money. We have little chance of getting these officials fired. The courts are their accomplices. Many women are afraid even to try to get their money.

Woman 2: The court here is just as corrupt as the child support office. One woman went to court after her daughter died to get money for her grandchildren's support. She didn't get any because she couldn't pay off the officials, because she is poor. Two social workers came to her house and made her sign papers she couldn't read, which gave up her rights. She needs a lawyer, but lawyers want a lot of money. One man killed his wife by beating her, and still the court wouldn't make him pay support for his children.

Woman 3: My case is delicate: I am trying to get custody of my grandchild. His mother didn't feed him, even though I used to give her money for him, and he was put out to work at age six or seven. Several times the child called me when his mother had left him alone without food or enough clothing.

I got a lawyer and went to court. The child testified to all this and said he wanted to live with us. Psychologists examined him over three months. He hugged me when he saw me, and he ran the other way when he saw his mother. Yet the court gave the child back to her. The little boy screamed when his mother tried to take him. The judges called the police! It took a long time before we finally got him.

News & Letters was asked to bring pressure on the Ecuadoran government about these abuses. Write to **Presidente, Corte Nacional de Menores, Quito, Ecuador**, demanding to reorganize the tribunal de Menores de Azuay; and to the **Ministro de Bienestar Social, Quito, Ecuador**, demanding they act on reports about corruption in the Azuay office. Send copies of letters to **Abdala Bucaram, Presidente de la Republica**, and to **Vicepresidente Rosalia Arateaga**, who claims she represents women, also in Quito. Please also send copies of letters and reprints of this article to **News & Letters**.

—T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting

Welfare reform protests

New York—Thousands of people in 26 states demonstrated on July 21 to demand President Clinton veto the welfare repeal law, and several hundred New Yorkers turned out again in August at the opening of the Democratic campaign headquarters and the birthday fundraiser for Clinton at Radio City Music Hall. Groups organizing here include the Welfare Reform Network, the Welfare Rights Initiative, the Suffolk Welfare Warriors on Long Island, WHAM (Women's Health Action Mobilization) and ACT-UP (AIDS activists).

Terri Scofield of Suffolk Welfare Warriors describes workfare as "slavery." You can lose it—and thus be cut off welfare—at the whim of your supervisor or if you miss a day for almost any reason. One woman who could not get child care lost it for bringing her child to work. You are not even permitted time off to go for a job interview! And you can only get onto welfare now after you have attempted to get a job by making 40 job applications within 45 days.

Thus, it is remarkable that some workfare workers are trying to organize their own union through a group called WEP Workers Together. There are now 30,000 people on workfare in New York City, but the new law could raise the number to 100,000.

Five thousand students were forced to drop out of college last year due to the requirement of 26 hours a week of workfare, scheduled without regard to the hours or location of their schools. More will be forced out even if they can perform workfare because of the severe limitations on eligibility.

At a teach-in by welfare activists Sept. 26 sponsored by WHAM, we agreed that the real purpose of the law is to benefit business by forcing down wages, giving people no alternative but to work at whatever wage they can get.

One freshman Congressman, Mike Forbes of Long Island, sent out a letter saying that welfare recipients in a family of four receive the equivalent of \$41,000 a year in benefits. The Suffolk Welfare Warriors organized women in families of four to demand "fair hearings" (appeals) at which each testified about the total of her benefits and, on the basis of Forbes' letter, demanded the balance of the \$41,000 due her! Needless to say, they have all lost.

—Anne Jaclard

New from Wayne State Press

Women's Liberation and The Dialectics of Revolution

Reaching for The Future

RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

"Marx's new continent of thought and of revolution, grounded in the concept of 'revolution in permanence,' may seem unconnected to the organizational question. And the whole question of organization as non-elitist and demanding the practice of new relations between men and women was not connected by the Women's Liberationists to Marx's philosophy of 'revolution in permanence' as ground for organization... The essence of an organizing idea (with a capital 'I')—that is to say, the philosophy of revolution—is that the uprooting needed cannot divide theory from practice nor philosophy from organization. There can be no new society short of abolishing the division of mental and manual labor, thereby creating the conditions needed for the self-development of a whole person" (pp.6-7).

To order, see page 7.

Control at stake in Staley shifts

Decatur, Ill.—Staley wants fast rotations in the worst way. We currently work three days on, three days off, and change shifts every 30 days. They wanted us to change to three days on nights, three days off, then three days on day shift, three days off, then three days back on nights, a fast rotation. We mustered enough forces at the August local union meeting to keep the fast rotations from happening. We stymied them because it takes a two-thirds majority local vote to countermand the motion we passed last winter to keep the contract the way it is. Their secret weapon is that there are more scabs working at Staley than us, but they only got a few over 70 people to rescind the motion, with 60 voting against. It seemed like the only people talking in favor of the motion were the scabs and the local leadership.

By pushing rotating shifts, the company is overlooking the documentation on health by countless doctors and

researchers for two reasons: greed or profit, and control. Medical studies say the rotational shifts increase cardiovascular problems, epilepsy, gastrointestinal disorders, drug abuse and alcoholism, all from sleep deprivation. The worker always feels like sleeping. Professor Moread of Harvard, who was one of the first to discover circadian rhythms, researched the shift schedules at 24-hour plants. He used computers to figure out a less harmful schedule. All the things Staley is doing undermine that.

Studies show that 3-4 a.m. is when accidents tend to occur for truckers. The brain simply isn't functioning. The same thing happens with factory workers on rotational shifts. And it's harder on older workers. When somebody goes into that slumber mode, even though they might be physically active, they can push the wrong button and the whole city of Decatur will be gone.

We work with propylene and ethylene oxide. In Desert Storm, you could see the force of 80- to 100-pound bombs with these chemicals. We have tanks with thousands of pounds of the same chemicals. We have boilers with over a thousand pounds per square inch of pressure inside. And Staley doesn't have the manpower to keep the elevators clean of dust. During the lockout, a guy loading a tanker truck was killed in a dust explosion.

—Staley worker

Sinai Kosher atrocities

Chicago—People were talking about the "Workshop Talks" story in the August-September *News & Letters* about the woman who lost her finger in a machine. It sounds just like what's been happening with us. It has happened several times here.

One of the packing machines, Multivac 7, never has enough women working on it. It goes much faster than Multivac 2. Kiran, the foreman, never does five-pound packages with enough women. A woman was working at a machine that might stop or jam up. We try to put extra hot dogs in the packets while the machine has stopped so we don't fall behind. The machine had stopped and while she was putting dogs into a packet, someone started it. A block in the machine closed on her two finger tips. One was cut off, the other was hurt badly.

All the women were crying because they had enough. It was the sixth time in as many years someone had a serious injury, including a woman who got her sleeve caught in the machine and injured her wrist; a man who lost some skin and a fingernail in a machine; a man who had the freezer door shut on his hand; and a mechanic who lost two fingers when a machine started unexpectedly.

They had the machines sanitized and then they proceeded to run hot dogs again. An hour later the plant manager, Nanu, called a meeting with all three lines. He made a diagram of the machines on a side of a box to teach us how to work them. He told us by no means are we supposed to put a hand in the machine we're working on. Then he said they needed to have us get back to work.

One of the women said it's one thing teaching us how to work. It's another thing to do the work. It's different when you're the one to work the machine. Her point was we know what we're doing. Kiran wants the line to constantly run. We are under pressure all the time.

—Sinai Kosher worker

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

running well at the same time, we almost can't help but make rate. Automation is designed to overcome what Karl Marx called "certain natural obstructions in the weak bodies and the strong wills of its human attendants." We actually have to work harder when the machines aren't running well. Yet we do a "good job" in this management-by-results atmosphere only when we make rate. The contradiction is clear to everyone on the line.

Also clear to most, although they might not say it this way, is that all of our labor is forced labor. We do not work on this line out of a deep, abiding interest in the manufacture of anti-perspirant or in the future of Helene Curtis. We come here to earn a living. Our labor is a mere means to the life we have outside this plant. We hear these capitalist apologists talk of attitude from across a deep class divide.

A comrade, upon hearing this story, noted the similarity between Don Reed's tirade and aspects of the Thought of Mao Zedong which Dunayevskaya sharply critiqued. She critiqued Mao who was "forever ready to make a 'Great Leap Forward' over objective conditions, confident that will and hard work, especially hard work by 700 million souls, can achieve miracles, 'Make one day equal twenty years' " (Marxism and Freedom, p. 336).

Mao had failed to revolutionize production relations. "Moving completely within the superstructure of what Marx would have considered false consciousness (national culture against class nature), Mao believed that the conflict in policies between himself and workers, peasants, and youth could be 'resolved' by the 'remolding of thought of all' " (Philosophy and Revolution, p. 179). However, those conflicts, the harsh conditions imposed, and the disparity between the ideal of socialism and the reality of China provoked the workers, peasants and youth to revolt.

U.S. capitalists are as determined as the Chinese ruling class was, and is, to maintain exploitative production relations. They preach a common interest between capital and labor. We can make that new rate and save our jobs if we just "work together" and "pay attention to our process." No one on our line believes that. However, we do not see ourselves as active opponents of capital, as the potential creators of an alternative to this degrading and abusive form of labor. That aspect of reality has yet to be developed by us.

Guess? abandons shops

Los Angeles—On Aug. 7, a group of Los Angeles garment workers filed a class action lawsuit against Guess? Inc. and 16 contractors on behalf of about 2000 workers in their sweatshops. The lawsuit includes non-payment of minimum wage and overtime, falsification of timecards and industrial homework. In response Guess? Inc. swept through the sweatshops taking everything with them, and left workers without jobs in an effort to appear clean by disassociating from those sweatshops.

Guess? Inc. had publicly threatened the workers and its own employees with no welfare, no unemployment benefits, no employment in Los Angeles ever, if they organize. Enrique, ex-worker in a sweatshop where most of the workers were of Mexican origin, said: "They think that Mexicans are stupid, that we cannot hurt them, that they could do without production for five years. They have a lot of money to buy the law."

Sandra, also recently fired, said: "We come here to work...thinking in the U.S. there was freedom, but we were fired without reason...." Now, said Raul, unemployed, workers are fighting for a contract, a decent wage so that they do not have to live month by month, and for the return of the jobs for all those that were fired: "Nosotros queremos un contrato y que nos regresen el trabajo aunque sea con sueldos caidos."

—Mary Amano

Post the truth at Dobbs

Memphis, Tenn.—The situation has gotten so bad at Dobbs International Catering, where we prepare and load food onto airplanes, that a group of workers sent the vice president, Gordon Anderson, a letter. Two people under him had a meeting with some of the employees. They said Anderson was upset, that he was out of the country and when he came back he would look into it. Anderson told them to post the letter. This is a small part of what it said:

"We, as Concerned Employees of Dobbs, are worried that things are still so bad because of Mr. Drachler and Mr. Woodard, that there is going to be a postal-like massacre at Dobbs.

"The new over-the-road driver's test should test us on things we deal with on the job. We are harassed when we miss these questions that have nothing to do with our jobs.

"Mr. Drachler is prejudiced and has been promoting racism at Dobbs by favoring less seniority Latino workers over workers who have been here many more years. Mr. Drachler wants to keep people fighting with each other, at each other's throats.

"The women who prepare the food are harassed and told they have to take any job rather than the job they bid on. The union employees are singled out for even worse treatment. If you complain to Mr. Woodard he always defends the supervisor."

General Manager Keith Drachler in response put a big picture of Martin Luther King, Jr., on the wall in the training room. Drachler might as well have said, "You're a bunch of stupid people. You say I'm racist so I'm going to hang this picture so you'll know I'm not." He hung it where only workers would see it, no visitors. This is a disgrace! It's degrading to King.

We love the letter that was posted. Even Drachler couldn't deny the truth. We were glad some people were doing something—especially since Teamsters Local 667 has been no help at all! Everyone has their spirits up and are expecting something to happen. Dobbs thinks they know who did this, but they are wrong! We've got a message for Dobbs. You don't know, and you never will.

This is not over because things are no better. In transportation several of the drivers want to bid down to loaders, which they have the right to do but management won't let them. They keep harassing workers, giving them more work than they can do, making them do work and not paying them what they should for it. The struggle at Dobbs continues, but we mean to win.

—Black workers at Dobbs

Ford pact: low-pay future

Detroit—The tentative three-year UAW-Ford contract negotiated Sept. 16 includes these provisions:

- Workers get a 3% wage increase the first year and 3% bonuses the next two years. Bonuses reduce company costs on everything based on wages, including pensions, overtime pay and vacation pay.

- Ford promises to keep 95% of its present 105,000 jobs for three years—but not if there is a serious recession.

- Ford can pay a permanently lower wage scale to employees who work in any new parts plant the company buys or builds, giving the company incentive to hire low-pay workers and get rid of those with high pay. Pensions are also increased to encourage high-pay workers to retire.

- Ford continues the two-tier wage system in all union plants whereby new employees start at about a third less in pay and other reduced benefits, and get full pay and benefits only after three years.

Present retirees, seeking a cost-of-living provision for their pensions, got nothing except the existing year-end \$600 bonus, which one Ford retiree said was "all eaten up by inflation before we get it."

On the production line, however, working conditions continue to worsen as a result of previous concessions. At the Ford Rouge plant the speed-up resulting from worker cutbacks is so bad on the new 1997 Mustang line that, as one worker said, "One day we were sent home strictly because of quality problems." Bad cars piled up so fast that they couldn't be repaired without shutting the line down for the day.

—Andy Phillips

Local 282 wins at Hood

(Continued from page 1)

This summer, Hood workers organized again, after the International turned bargaining rights back over to 282. On Aug. 3 they held a mass meeting and authorized a strike. Local leadership and the workers built a community and civil rights support coalition to put pressure on the company. Then on Sept. 11, workers held a rally in front of the plant on their lunchtime. They chanted "No raise, no work" and "No contract, no work." The workers were joined at the rally by members of the Jackson chapter of SCLC.

After the contract was signed and ratified by the Hood workers, Local 282 President Willie Rudd said that "forcing Hood to change his mind took a combined effort. Community pressure had a lot to do with it. SCLC was out in front in building the community support, especially Jim Evans and Stephanie Parker-Weaver. But the greatest factor in this victory was the determination of the workers. They just would not be satisfied with anything but Local 282, the union of their choosing."

"Because the company had lost money for several years and showed us the figures, we only wanted a one-year contract," Rudd said. "We want to get back to the table soon and get what we deserve." Hood agreed to a 15¢ across-the-board raise immediately, with a \$100 bonus at Christmas and another \$100 bonus in six months. There will also be changes in the way grievances are handled. Hood workers also have reason to believe the workforce will go back to pre-layoff size. In the last year employment fell from 350 to about 230. But now all laid-off workers are back to work.

The day after the contract, Local 282 and the workers turned a previously scheduled community and civil rights support rally into a mass victory celebration. Speakers included Congressman Bennie Thompson, Martin Luther King III, James Orange, and representatives from the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, SCLC, the Steelworkers, and many rank-and-file labor activists from across Mississippi. "It was a sight to see all those people backing us," said one Hood worker. "But we have a lot more work to do now, signing people up and making ourselves stronger. We will never go back to welfare wages, because we built our own union. We believe in ourselves."

—Michael Flug

Mass picket at USA Today

Port Huron, Mich.—"Somebody yelled 'sit down!' and everybody sat in the two driveways. You could hear the air brakes and the squeal of tires as this whole caravan of trucks came to a halt." "The presses were stopped several times, and they missed the early airport run."

This was how participants described the action on Sept. 22 to stop distribution of USA Today, whose owner, Gannett, also owns the Detroit News. After nearly 15 months, the strike by six unions against the Detroit Newspaper Agency is far from over. Around 200 "Friends of Labor," strikers and supporters, picketed the printing plant undisturbed by the Port Huron police all night until the St. Clair County Sheriffs arrived in full riot gear and arrested 27 strikers.

On Sept. 12 ACOSS (Action Coalition of Strikers and Supporters) was instrumental in calling a mass meeting of striking newspaper workers. Although about 500 strikers turned out, many were turned off by the lengthy speeches by the members of the Metropolitan Council of Newspaper Workers (the official negotiating body). An open microphone for strikers was relegated to the last half hour of a four-hour program. "After 14 months they [Metropolitan Council] should have showed us more respect. We should have been first instead of last," said a member of the Typographer's Union.

Most members insist that production of the scab Detroit News and Detroit Free Press must be shut down to win a fair contract, with all strikers returned to work (no "permanent replacements"). A Guild member said, "Shut 'em down! Everything else builds towards that."

—Susan Van Gelder

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

Editor's Note: The following letter by Raya Dunayevskaya was written a few months prior to the exciting revolts in France, 1968, and offers an important critique of the influence of Althusser's "pro-Maoist" version of Marxism on the socialist movement of the time. We publish it here because it speaks poignantly to the continuing influence of Althusser on recent debates on culture and ideology in so much postmodern and post-Marx Marxist theory today.

Jan. 29, 1968

Dear A.R.:

Please forgive me for not commenting on "Contradiction and Overdetermination" by Louis Althusser, which you were kind enough to photo offset for me last summer. At first the delay was due to the fact that I had no chance to read the essay, as I was preoccupied with my new book-in-progress, *Philosophy and Revolution*. Then, when I finally did get to read it, I was so disappointed by the writings of a man who had so long been built up as an "original thinker, a new young French philosopher" that I could not get myself to write.

Two very different types of events prompt this letter. One is the fact that Louis Althusser has since become a leader of a pro-Maoist trend within the French Communist Party, or at least has scared the Central Committee with his influence over young students and the possibility that whereas an outright Maoist "party" failed to get much of a following in France, a Maoist position that has a philosophic Althusserian turn may speak "sufficiently in French" as to win a following and split their intellectual periphery. They have told him that, whereas he may continue his "speciality" (freedom in purely abstract discussions), he may not meddle in politics.*

THE SECOND, and to me, the more important reason for this note is you, that is to say, your continuing many-sided study of Marxism that is very obviously not narrowly factional. I was told about the latest material you ordered. You have been sent my "Notes for Lectures on Lenin's Philosophic Notebooks" and the *American Worker* pamphlet, and I herewith enclose my 1946-47 articles on the "Nature of the Russian Economy," but I do not have Johnson's 1941 Resolution, nor for that matter, my own of the same year, with the title "Russia is a State-Capitalist Society."

But since this is 1968, not 1941, I think it is important to move on, and if I find that you do not have my piece "Marx's Humanism Today," I will send you a copy. It is important, both objectively and "subjectively" since it also answers the question of Humanism regarding which the translator and/or editor of Althusser's article makes some snide remarks. Who was the translator—C.L.R. James?

NOW THEN, the Althusser essay, the very title of which I found intellectually abhorrent because it was vulgarly economist despite all its pretense to a non-economist approach, not to mention the fact that the word itself, overdetermination, has Freudian origins. Remember that Marx attacked not only economists and vulgar Communists but also "abstract materialists" (natural scientists)—in a word, all those who did not appreciate in full the meaning of History, as past, as present, as future; history, not as Althusser understands it as "the run of History...through the multiform world of the superstructure" (p. 32), but History in Marx's sense of people, workers shaping history, resolving contradictions in life and not only in thought, and thereby developing the multi-dimensional in Man.

Althusser, in typically intellectualist fashion, is too preoccupied with "infrastructure-superstructure complex" (p. 31) to be able to listen, much less hear, the Subject, Man himself. What he, therefore, tells the reader to grapple with is dogmatism-antidogmatism, and that only as those above interpret it, and thus he never confronts the living strata below, unless it is as something to draw out your pity. But Marx didn't speak only of "cold, hunger for his poor worker," as Althusser would have; the distinguishing distinctive mark of Marxism as against all others—socialists, communists, utopians, anarchists, syndicalists—was that the worker was a thinking human being, a creative moulder of history—"Working, thinking, fighting, bleeding Paris—almost forgetful, in its incubation of a new society, of the cannibals at its gates—radiant in the enthusiasm of its historic initiative!"

SO HEAVILY does Althusser's anti-Hegelianism weigh him down, prey upon him, that it takes 17 pages out of a 21 page article before he ever gets down to the subject-matter, much less the living subject, at issue. He then attributes to Engels (to Engels, who said that there would have been no "scientific socialism" had there been

no Hegelian philosophy!) a break not only with the "Hegelian principle of explanation by self-consciousness (ideology) but also with the Hegelian theme of phenomenon-essence-truth-of. We are definitely concerned with a new relationship between new terms." (p. 31).

Outside of the fact that a new relationship is not something that merely relates "terms" as if we were engaged in a game of words, the elevation of an 1890 letter by Engels as "the new" for our age is nothing but a subterfuge for saying that nothing has really been left us by our founders, that "experiential protocol" (whatever that means!) "largely remains to be elaborated." (p. 33).



"Who has attempted to follow up the explorations of Marx and Engels? I can only think of Gramsci." Relegated to a footnote at this point is a reference to Lukacs.

TO BE precise, it constitutes but one sentence of the footnote; it is worth, however, a whole chapter (if I had the time to spare) for it reveals the whole degradation of thought that Stalinism has brought into the movement. (Oh, naturally, it is only "philosophically" since now that Stalin is dead and the established state authority permits one to speak of his "crimes," no one except Mao is any longer a proclaimed Stalinist!) Here is that priceless sentence: "Lukacs' essays, which are limited to the history of literature and philosophy, seem to me to be contaminated with a guilty Hegelianism, as if Lukacs wanted to absolve through Hegel his upbringing by Simmel and Dilthey."

Remembrance of Bess Gogol

Bessie Spiegel Gogol was Raya Dunayevskaya's oldest and closest comrade. From girls and young women whose experience was rooted in the immediate aftermath of the great Russian Revolution, to their first days in Chicago in the 1920s discovering a hammer and sickle in a storefront window thus beginning their re-discovery of Bolshevism in America, theirs was a relationship born in sisterhood, deeply shaped and transformed by the pull of revolution from Russia and the emergence of its counterpart on American soil.

If in the late 1920s and 1930s Raya began to develop a unique understanding of the Black question in America, one that would mature to the writings we know first in the 1940s and later in *American Civilization on Trial*, then Bess was that other Bolshevik who immersed herself within that Black struggle from the 1930s, through the 1940s, into the heart of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement and to the very end of her life.

What we are writing about for the historic record, so that it does not become a forgotten dimension, is what Bess meant for Raya: 1) at the time when Marxist-Humanism was first being formed, 2) in its emergence as a separate tendency and its first projection in book form, and 3) in the development of Marxist-Humanism out of Marxist-Humanism in News and Letters Committees.

The comradeship of Bess with Raya had its most definitive stamp as Raya developed her ideas in each of these moments. Raya has written of the emergence of "a new kind of revolutionary" at the time of the Spanish Civil War. When that new kind of revolutionary went to Mexico as Russian language secretary to Trotsky, Bess came to visit. And when shortly afterwards Raya broke with Trotsky over the nature of the Russian economy, daring to challenge this man of October, Bess was one of those handful of comrades who recognized in Raya the emergence of a new tendency within Marxism. It began an outpouring of passion, energy, drive, and tenacity to put forth a developing body of ideas that all of us who have known Bess at one or another moment have witnessed. It was her passionate relationship to those ideas that stamped Bess as a most original character.

It is true that in the Johnson-Forest Tendency there was a philosophic dialogue, which can be seen in the three-way correspondence between Raya, Grace Lee Boggs and C.L.R. James. One can catch Raya's creative development of ideas in the correspondence, but this is often in spite of James' impatient rush to pigeonhole Raya's thought. When the Tendency broke up, Raya's search for co-thinkers, for collaborators in working out the Idea of Marxist-Humanism took on a new urgency. It meant having the kind of colleagues with whom you could test out your rough-hewn ideas in the making. Bess was one of those crucial people.

Bess often proclaimed that she was no intellectual.

Note, first, the little conjunction that joins very different, even opposed, fields, "literature and philosophy." These fields are opposed not just "in general" but very specifically in Lukacs since, in matters of literature, Lukacs was analyzing what others had done, whereas in philosophy he is a true original. Long before anyone, including Lukacs, had known the full extent of Marx's Hegelian roots (the Social Democracy had never bothered to publish those precious archives of Marx which they inherited), Lukacs had elaborated this relationship that, though it was written in 1923, remains unequalled to this day by any other Marxist, Gramsci included. Althusser, on the other hand, hasn't even the simple decency to refer you to that work so that the reader can check for himself.

Secondly, and crucially, note the gratuitous Stalinist amalgam-building in the reference to Lukacs' alleged "upbringing by Simmel and Dilthey." Whatever these reactionary philosophers had to do with Lukacs' "upbringing," it is a fact that they nowhere figured in Lukacs' thinking and activity over nearly half a century. That is to say, from the moment he became a Marxist, not a single grain of their philosophy is present in the matter at issue, the essays which constituted his original philosophic contribution, that were repudiated by him under Stalinist pressure when Lukacs capitulated to Stalinism, and which now are remembered, not because of his philosophic "errors," but because he dared, for a few miraculous weeks of the Hungarian Revolution, to associate himself with it.

ABOVE ALL, what is it that Althusser really means to say with his phrase "guilty Hegelianism"; he doesn't bother to explain here precisely because he isn't so much interested in attacking "Hegel" or Lukacs as he is in attacking Marx's "Hegelianism." Oh, how Hegel haunts these apologists for the State. "I shall not evade the most burning issue," concludes Althusser; "it seems to me that either the whole logic of 'sublation' must be rejected, or we must give up any attempt to explain how the proud and generous Russian people bore Stalin's crimes and repression with such resignation; how the Bolshevik Party could tolerate them; and how a Communist leader could order them." (p. 34)

Poor Hegel, he now gets blamed for Stalin's crimes! The logic of sublation, that is to say, the dialectic of transcendence, is to lead us, not to freedom, but to white-wash of Russian state-capitalism; and if it doesn't, as it surely can't and won't, then we must "drive this phantom back into the night." (p. 35) Fini. No doubt Mao will help Althusser do just that; but Marx won't.

Yours,
Raya

And yet Bess's determined belief in the ideas of Marxist-Humanism and their needed organizational expression helped to sustain them when only the smallest handful were present.

One dimension of Bess's relationship to Raya that should be recalled, is that of Bess as nurse. Raya had severe illnesses in the period before *Philosophy and Revolution* and again after Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation* and *Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*. In both cases Bess remained at Raya's side full time. Here, it is not possible to separate the dimensions of nurse, and of revolutionary colleague. Raya wrote of this in a short note to Bess attached to a completed draft of *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* in December 1984:

"'Science' and 'Natural Will' may flatter themselves that 'they' brought me back to creativity. But we know the truth that it is You who did since I could not have made it if you weren't there as...Colleague, Professional, Universal call of Freedom, Creativity of Personality to articulate it—Love Love Love Raya."

What can perhaps be more fully documented is the period when the stench of McCarthyism was still in the air, Bess time and again went from department to department at university after university to create lecture tours for Raya on the West Coast. Her determination to project Raya's Marxist-Humanism was ceaseless.

All of this is not to say that Bess's great passion for the ideas of Marxist-Humanism could not have a biting edge and harsh impatience when she disagreed with how those ideas were projected, or practiced in News and Letters Committees. Her narrow impatience on occasion led to clashes with Raya.

Bess and Raya were comrades, colleagues, revolutionary sisters within the body of emancipatory ideas which have come to be known as Marxist-Humanism. That historic moment needs to be recorded.

—Judy and Eugene Gogol

P.S. We are not here writing of several other dimensions of Bess' life, including her relationship with the love of her life, Louis, and with ourselves, whose political/philosophic lives she greatly shaped. These were spoken to briefly, as well as her relation to News and Letters Committees in terms of archives, correspondence and work with other comrades, at the graveside service by ourselves and others.

POETRY SLAM fundraiser
for the New York News and Letters Committee
Sunday Oct. 20 2:30 pm
Washington Square Church
133 W. 4th Street (Parish House Parlor), Manhattan

*For the French edition of *Marxism and Freedom*, Dunayevskaya submitted the following addition:

The spectre is also haunting the French Communist-Maoist philosopher, Althusser, and precisely on the same theoretical task, the relevance of Marx's 1844 Humanist essays. None of those Communist revisionists who wish to postdate Marx's "maturity" from the mid-1840s to the late 1850s, displays greater casuistry and measureless pretension than Althusser. In his *For Marx*, which, more correctly, should have been entitled *Against Marx*, he has recourse to pseudo-psychoanalysis to express his venom against Marx's Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic as "the prodigious 'abreaction' indispensable to the liquidation of his (Marx's) 'disordered' consciousness." It takes the shameless mentality of state-capitalism calling itself communism to delude oneself to the point of thinking that so infantile an attack against the young Marx could cover over the greatness of his vision of a new world founded on a truly human basis.

Essay Article

by Ron Brokmeyer

Subjective barriers in socialization of labor today

At one stage we tried to divide socialization of labor from revolt, the former being still capitalistic, and the latter the beginning of socialism. We didn't get very far because that socialization was capitalistic but revolt liberates it from its capitalistic integument. Marx...did not make negation of the negation any more concrete...

—Raya Dunayevskaya, May 12, 1953

At the end of Capital Marx leaves no blueprint for a new society. He does, however, in chapter 32 on "The Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation" leave a concept for the birth of a new society—the dialectic of negation of the negation. Marx calls capitalist accumulation one long epoch of first negation. This is the negation of social relations of those working the land, i.e., peasantry, under pre-capitalist social relations. Through the force of the state they are expropriated, set "free" from any way to make a living.

Capitalist accumulation begins and ends with the creation of proletarians who have no way to survive but to sell their ability to work, their labor power. Capitalist accumulation proceeds through the "centralization of capital" and "the entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world market, and with this, the growth of the international character of the capitalist regime." This process of centralization socializes and disciplines labor until there is a "negation of the negation," that is, when "the centralization of the means of production and the socialization of labour reach a point at which they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder."

Historic moments in the drive to burst the integument, such as the Paris Commune of 1871 or the Polish Solidarity movement of 1980-81, provide a glimpse of a different future based on the reorganization of society from below. The collective teamwork of the masses in the Paris Commune created, for a moment, a whole new world of social relations, which for Marx clarified precisely what it means to burst the capitalist integument.

NEW FACE OF STATE-CAPITALISM

In March of this year workers in the Gdansk shipyard, the militant birthplace of Solidarity when it took on Polish totalitarian state-capitalism, decided to accept a no strike pledge. Now most of the Gdansk shipyard is shut down altogether. What totalitarian state-capitalism couldn't do, state-capitalism as the enforcer of the global capital market has achieved with hardly a whimper.

In the U.S. in the 1930s, the birth of the CIO represented a near total challenge to the rule of capital in massive sit down strikes. Workers' subjectivity challenged the very idea of capitalism. The state interceded by passing labor laws guaranteeing the right to organize independent unions and outlawing company unions. Unions became a mediation, transcending old capitalist relations. However, to paraphrase Marx's original (1844) way of posing negation of the negation, only by transcending that mediation can positive humanism begin from itself, i.e., the full realization by workers' that their own self-activity is the ongoing determination of a non-capitalist objectivity. Without that second moment of transcendence the future is left open to the kind of retrogression we face today.

Today the catchword is "teamwork." Congress even passed a bill to overthrow the 1930s legislation and legitimize the company union, once again, in the name of "teamwork." Clinton vetoed it to keep his friends in the labor bureaucracy while issuing "waivers" for companies initiating "teamwork" programs. The unions themselves opened the door to this by embracing quality programs in the face of global competition. Today established unions will promote any kind of "strategic partnership" just to stay in the action.

In every epoch the state has been the enforcer of "reforming" social relations according to the needs of capital required for its specific stage of production. This includes everything from prison warehousing of the poor and forcing workers into sweated labor through welfare cutbacks to wholesale gutting of education and healthcare. The "teamwork" law, Clinton's waivers, and union cooperation signal the complete transformation of unionism, bringing organized labor in line with global capital's own organizing principle.

LABOR SUBJECTIVITY, 'TEAM' CONCEPT

The team concept, which is all the rage among today's bosses, encapsulates capitalism's socialization of labor in a time of permanent restructuring. The capitalist re-or-

ganization of labor is merely a tool to increase productivity or, in other words, to reduce that most capitalist of all determinants, socially necessary labor time.

In practice the way restructuring often works is that the money men decide how many jobs need to be cut for the company to stay "competitive." Then management has to figure out how to re-organize work for those who are left. The team's paramount struggle is to align itself with the new designated labor time for its product. The price of remaining in the game is each worker internalizing the phantasmagoric objectivity which Marx called



the commodity-form. It is phantasmagoric because this form of the object reflects back to the mind not a material but a purely social property, the amount of labor time incorporated "in" commodities. In this way human relations take the form of relations between things.

In place of an army of managers, organizational discipline aims, in large part, to convince workers that reducing socially necessary labor time is in their own interest. This purely subjective ideological integument drives today's vaunted decentralization, which merely transfers much centralized control from growing hierarchies to the realm of capital markets. At the same time, capital's mobility means that its power to "set free" workers from their jobs is nearly unrestricted. The state amplifies this power by breaking down trade barriers and by making sure there is no welfare state safety net.

In the Republican primary campaign, the neo-fascist Pat Buchanan tapped into the resentment against greedy corporations like AT&T, a corporation that continues to get rid of workers as they are making record profits. This resentment swept aside for a moment the much ballyhooed Republican "Contract With America" overnight. The retrogressionist character of this brand of "anti"-capitalism is the American road to fascism.

Racism, sexism, nationalism, and homophobia, raised in the name of preserving the disintegrating bourgeois family, find scapegoats for capitalist crises. Deeper retrogression is in store if we avoid facing the fundamental nature of capitalist objectivity, namely, the form that human relations take when they are phantasmagorically tied to commodities on a global scale. The way these issues appear on the political stage contrasts sharply with the fundamental contradiction workers feel in their own activity in this new stage of the socialization of labor.

A Kaiser (HMO) worker recently (January-February 1996 N&L) focused on the divide between, on the one hand, a worker's view of teamwork and cooperation and, on the other hand, teamwork which is totally constrained by the capitalist integument. Management's concept is, he wrote, "working together as a team in order to compete against the other sharks in the marketplace." This "team concept hardly points to a cooperative result—it is either vanquish or be vanquished. The threat of losing your job is present every day. You're told you're nothing if not part of our team. The company line is that 'our team means your survival.'"

In contrast, in this worker's view, the genuine idea of "team and cooperation is based on providing what is best for patients not the world of cost/benefit analysis which treats health care as overhead. Our concept is not exclusive but inclusive." In other words, for workers the goal of restructuring is distinct from the concrete and useful collective effort of keeping people healthy. Two California ballot initiatives, Prop. 214 and 216 sponsored by SEIU and the California Nurses Association, aim to make patient care the focus of health care work. The health care industry is pouring in big money to defeat these propositions, claiming they will raise the cost of health care.

The test of the principle of inclusiveness is overcoming racism which is fundamental to the structure of American capitalism. Today the color line is increasingly what separates the high paying high-tech economy from the low-tech one, dominated by sweated labor and unemployment. This is what makes the Black struggle for inclusion, which is much deeper than the fight for affirmative action, a subjectivity reaching beyond the capitalist integument.

Thus, in the newly industrialized South, Black workers, mostly women, are organizing unions, re-creating, from below, the original meaning of unionism. They are drawing on the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement. In reaction to the anti-immigrant Prop. 187, there is new life in the UFW (United Farm Workers) in California as

it is becoming more like the original community-based union it used to be among farm workers. Making so-called "illegals" into strictly "hands" with no rights, meets the requirements of California agribusiness. "Right to work" regions of the USA have become a magnet for European and Japanese capital looking for low-wage non-union labor. Low-paying manufacturing and service sector jobs provide the value producing foundation for this high-tech economy.

NEEDED: A NEW SENSE OF OBJECTIVITY

What is new today is not the collapse in productivity growth which is blamed for the deterioration of the conditions of life and labor. That story goes back to 1974. What is new is that in spite of capitalism's pitiful performance, the fetish of high tech has a more powerful hold than ever. The U.S., considered a basket case a few years ago, is now deemed "most competitive."

Production for value, or the amount of labor time "in" commodities, is a purely social property depending on the level of technology, intensity of labor, level of teamwork, etc. Within a given industry each individual commodity has a value according to the average socially necessary labor time required to produce it. A productivity increase raises the relative value expressed in commodities produced in a particular company. At the same time the total value produced is equal to the total labor time and is, therefore, lowered. All companies realize value according to the average socially necessary labor time. However, in relation to that average the company that raises productivity realizes more than the amount of labor time "in" its commodities.

When all companies either adopt the same productive methods or go out of business, the value realized is equal for all. This sets off a new round of productivity increases through more machines, etc. From the point of view of the individual capitalist organization it has to appear that more value comes from more machines, more productivity, and more teamwork when the exact opposite is true. Bourgeois economics is oriented around just this inverted sense of objectivity that aims to eliminate capitalism's value creating substance, labor power.

The catchword in corporate organizations today is that everything one does must be "value adding." The logic of this internalized discipline of capital has meant the elimination of many layers of management. The labor force is also increasingly contingent, i.e., temporary, "just-in-time," contract labor.² A contingent labor force creates nearly total flexibility for capital's needs. However, the subjective side of flexibility is that the more workers cooperate and collectively organize production on their own, the more state-capitalism's external ideological constraints become transparent. Another aspect of this subjective side is that the quickened pace of the constant revolutions in production demands a worker who is not tied to one specialized task for a lifetime, but rather is constantly learning new skills. Marx intimated that one positive aspect arising out of this process is the "totally developed individual" (p. 618).

While higher paid high-tech workers aren't actively organizing in opposition to this system, many nevertheless feel very deep alienation in the cubicle workstation world where corporate decision makers often don't have a clue as to what they actually do and feel. Scott Adams' Dilbert comic strip, which is also the focus of a popular new book, is a cultural expression of the alienation high-tech workers experience, and whose messages are the source of Scott Adams' ideas. Dilbert cartoons are displayed throughout the high-tech workplace.

Congress' "teamwork" bill represents management's realization that in the end, it is only the cooperative human factor that gives them productivity gains. While harboring the illusion that an independent workers' movement has been effectively shut down, today's ideologues hype the new push for company unions as "really about a recognition that American workers are intelligent...can make decisions for themselves [and] can contribute a powerful intellectual resource to the American company." Their exploitative goal is to "tap that resource" to "compete in a world market."³

Capital now acknowledges that it has reached the limits of its ability to raise productivity through technology alone. This exposes its absolute vulnerability. Capital is dependent on workers internalizing its idea that the objective result of workers' activity represents the amount of labor time "in" commodities, and the world market is the crucible in which commodities relate to each other as carriers of this purely social property.

All of this points to a certain ease with which the transcendence of this new stage, so dependent on workers internalizing capitalist ideology, can be envisioned. The last 20 years of low rates of productivity growth make apparent to all, the absolute contradiction within capitalism. However, recognizing that absolute contradiction alone is not enough to resolve it.

The resolution comes only when we soberly confront the forms in which this false sense of objectivity is internalized. The harder they come with their threadbare ideology, the harder they fall; and fall they will if future freedom movements wholly overcome their own internal barriers. That is at the dialectical core of Marx's philosophy of "revolution in permanence." We must concretely grasp it as Marx worked it out in Capital as the negation of the negation that bursts the capitalist integument.

I intend to take that up in a future essay.

2. See Chris Tilly, *Half a Job: Bad and Good Part-Time Jobs in a Changing Labor Market* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), especially chapter 2, "Why Has Part-Time Employment Continued to Grow?" pp. 13-33.

3. Dan Yager of the employer Labor Policy Association on *The News Hour With Jim Lehrer*, May 14, 1996.

1. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, trans. by Ben Fowkes (New York: Vintage, 1976) p. 929.

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Raya Dunayevskaya

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REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS VS. THE "REAL" WORLD

Looking at the Republican and Democratic Conventions was like looking at a non-real world. The Republicans are going to balance the budget and cut our taxes? The Democrats are going to create a million jobs for us? Who do they think they are kidding?

Retired worker
California

* * *

When I watched the Republican and Democratic conventions on TV, I felt like I never left my country. These parties are like the Communist Party. Everything is so wonderful, everyone is so excited, everyone agrees with everything and salutes at the right moment. Every single movement of people on the floor was the same, they all behave the same. All spoke in unison, all show unanimity. They believe in a future that only their leader can bring.

Russian immigrant
Chicago

* * *

The coverage of welfare in the last issue was appreciated. Terry Moon was right when she talked of all the "horror of this bill." One she didn't mention was that the bill allows the state to force women under 18 to stay at school and live with an adult. This is a prescription of misery. In Michigan 45% of young mothers who live independently have been kicked out by their parents or guardians and 1/3 are already known to child welfare workers because of abuse or neglect. These women will not go home, they will simply disappear from the system into prostitution and/or homelessness. This welfare legislation is built on ignorance and misogynist ideology. The human devastation it will cause is just beginning to be known.

Women's liberationist
Michigan

* * *

One of my friends from Central America was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, partially traced back to past torture by the military in his country. His treatment at a state hospital was what I could only call subhuman. There is specialized treatment available for his disorder at Del Amo Medical Center but he had no access to it because he doesn't have Medicare, private insurance or money, and it would be very expensive treatment. The gigantic cuts in mental health problems by the Deukmejian and Wilson administrations have left people like this limited to skeletal "care" and no therapy. His wife got him released because if he had stayed a month his SSI check would be garnished by the hospital, leaving him and his family homeless.

Correspondent
Los Angeles

* * *

We aren't that far from having a total police state here in the U.S. When we went into the Persian Gulf I laughed at George Bush making a speech and quoting Thomas Paine's saying "These are the times that test men's souls." Paine would have spit in his face. I think of the phrase "Patriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels" every time I see these politicians wrapping themselves in the flag.

Vietnam vet
New Jersey

Finally the Pentagon has admitted that thousands of troops were exposed to nerve gas when the U.S. bombed weapons plants in Iraq in 1991. The home video of soldiers lounging 500 yards from the plants billowing smoke was

chillingly reminiscent of the Pentagon's films of soldiers 50 years ago being used as guinea pigs at atom bomb tests. Now, what about the Iraqis exposed to nerve gas?

Franklin Dmitryev
Memphis

* * *

It's good to hear that young people are searching for ways to revitalize the struggle, as Maya Jhansi states in her article, "Revolutionary subjectivity in the '90s" (August-September N&L). The reason the movement of the 1960s subsided is that there were no political actions led by labor. The anti-Vietnam War movement was primarily a student protest which died down after 1973 when the draft ended. But during the Persian Gulf massacre of 1991 the protests started at the same level as they ended in 1973. The syndrome of not supporting American imperialism is very much with us, which is why the recent actions in Panama, Haiti, Somalia and Iraq were very quick. The civil rights movements of the Black community, women and the gay and lesbian communities are very much with us and have expanded to levels beyond the scope of the 1960s. Yet while social mores changed, the class struggle remains because we still have capitalism. Only when labor organizes a serious fightback do fundamental structural changes occur. That's what is needed to combat today's economic crisis.

Lee Heller
San Francisco

* * *

Choosing between voting for Clinton or Dole is like "choosing" between date rape or stranger rape. Those who would vote for Clinton would be like those who would say to a woman whose "friend" raped her that "basically he's a good guy even though he just assaulted you." You'll probably come out of a date rape alive, but with a stranger, you don't know. That choice itself is a particular form of dehumanization.

Black feminist
Chicago

* * *

John Alan's "New South Olympics" powerfully addressed the demolition of the homes of poor Black and working class people and the homeless sweeps going on. The atrocities of the "Global Corporate Agenda" against the people's struggles for justice and freedom have been chronicled in a number of publications. It is detailed in a special issue of Project South from the Atlanta Institute for the Elimination of Poverty and Genocide. Another protest booklet is Spoilsport's Guide Book to Atlanta, spotlighting the many abuses associated with mega events like the Olympics. It amplifies the infamies perpetrated on the poor by tracing the legacy of displacement from Seoul to Santo Domingo, Rio de Janeiro, and Barcelona.

Sheila
New York City

* * *

I can't understand why there is not a revolution in this country. Why do working people keep going to work with all the downsizing and sweatshop wages? I can't understand why I keep going to work each day at two jobs. Even with my two jobs, I couldn't make it if my wife wasn't also working. Why do we keep allowing this system to continue? What's wrong with our thinking?

Sweatshop worker
Indiana

Readers' Views

GOAL: BLACK LIBERATION

I am disappointed that N & L, steeped in Marx's "revolution in permanence" does not see a semblance of new forms coming about from the Million Man March. While I am not sure I completely understand Marx's theory of "revolution in permanence," I do see all around a "hunger in permanence" and Islamic groups feeding the hungry. Where African Americans are being warehoused in more and more prisons, the Nation of Islam appears to rehabilitate them. Instead of pushing drugs, they encourage healthful fruit for the body and food for thought. Possible transformations can be seen regarding Europe, Russia, Bosnia, but where Minister Louis Farrakhan says to get education, build houses, build businesses, he is seen as a menace to be avoided at all costs. That attitude seems to me like sticking one's head in the sand. Having said that, I'm enclosing a contribution to help you continue your efforts from which will come Reason.

Friend and supporter
Detroit

* * *

The Million Man March was significant in a symbolic sort of way but no radical African Liberation movement came out of it. Nothing came out of it in Chicago. I have problems with the idea of people looking to Farrakhan as an alternative, because he's pushing African-American capitalism and because of his positions on women and heterosexism. Women's and Queer Liberation must be part of the liberation movement. That was the problem in the 1960s, when there were major problems in the Black movement and the Left on man/woman relations. We need to recognize the many people fighting for African-American liberation outside the confines of capitalism and the Democratic Party.

Black Activist
Chicago

* * *

The goal of Black liberation is to build our humanity, to dissolve the relationship between the oppressor and oppressed which dehumanizes us. This requires conscious re-thinking on the part of revolutionaries; what are we liberating ourselves from and what are we liberating ourselves to? We need something like the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa today in the U.S.

Black youth
Chicago

IMMIGRANTS AND REVOLUTION



I was surprised by a statement in John Marcotte's article on "New immigrants" (August-September N&L) about Latino-American workers, that "They are here now because...those forms of resistance and survival have dried up," written at the moment Ecuadorian peasants were burying themselves to their necks defending their land and source of work; in Colombia, the cocaleros were fighting in the middle of a crossfire between government, "leftist" guerrillas and the "narcos"; the landless peasants of Brazil were rallying daily, despite being massacred, for their rights not only as workers but as human beings; and in Argentina there was a 24-hour general strike in August against the government's neo-liberal "adjustments" and another one (36 hours) was confirmed for Sept. 26 and 27. It is clear that in Latin America not everybody can migrate from poverty and toward better (sic) conditions. For those who stay, resistance and survival is everyday life.

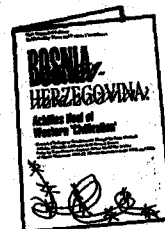
Carlos Varela
New York

* * *

Your work in N&L is very important to set free the ideas of immigrants in your country, ideas born from their reality, from their anguish and their hopes. The situation of those who remain is no

less desperate: children forced to live with people who mistreat them; people obliged to pay the migrant's debts. Many of the migrants who don't return were community leaders, people committed to the development of the community. Meeting the ideas of Marxist-Humanism helps them remain loyal to the project of building a more human and just society.

Revolutionary
South America



BOSNIA AND THE U.S.

I see the Bosnia pamphlet as an on-going work, which needs and will have much further development, especially concerning the U.S. One of the keys is being able to recognize new Subjects. In any society the conflicts on the outside with other groups reflect conflicts within. In a war, it isn't the conflict between opposing armies but the fact that either side would send its 18-year-olds to die and kill other youth. In the case of Bosnia, the deepest contradictions may be within Serbia itself. As new subjects of revolution arise and we recognize them, we may find them right in Serbia and Croatia.

American revolutionary
Berkeley, Cal.

I'm deeply grateful for your excellent pamphlet on Bosnia. Sheila Fuller's essay on "the philosophical meaning of Bosnia's struggle" is extremely relevant to class relations here. I have problems with the attitude of Noam Chomsky, as described in the pamphlet, that Bosnia was a "white man's war." In comparing the genocidal situations in Africa and Bosnia he seems to be saying that skin pigmentation should be what determines the level of support from revolutionaries in the U.S. The same forces that created the fascist onslaught in Bosnia also brought about the present political and economic climate in Central Africa. Chomsky made an extremely reactionary statement to justify the political attitude of revolutionaries here in the U.S. toward the Bosnian struggle for a multi-ethnic society. In a sense, the Bosnian struggle is also the Achilles heel of "human civilization."

Prisoner
Colorado

WHO ARE THE PRISONERS?

The powerful expressions of humanity's search for new relations that you read in the correspondence from prisoners makes you realize that we are all prisoners today.

Teacher
Illinois

SCOTTISH RADICALISM

As N&L arrived a few days ago, I was putting the finishing touches on my new book *The Very Bastards of Creation: Scottish-International Radicalism: A Biographical History, 1868*. In the chapter on the two outstanding 20th century Scottish radical educationalists, A. S. Neill (1883-1973) and R. F. MacKenzie (1910-1987), I recall my first meeting with Bob MacKenzie in the militant mining community of Lochgelly in 1962. Introduced to him in a small tea-shop, I was astonished to find that he was reading *Marxism and Freedom*. He told me that he liked Dunayevskaya's conception of socialism as complete freedom for all human beings.

Naturally, I hope readers of N&L will read it and persuade public libraries in the U.S. to get it on their shelves. It will be published by Clydeside Press in Glasgow in mid-October. It was the so-called English radical, John Wilkes, who in 1762 insisted that "the Scots were the very bastards of creation." If radical Scots like me can now proudly acknowledge ourselves to be what Wilkes said we were, it is at least partly due to what I learned from Raya Dunayevskaya and C.L.R. James in the 1950s.

James D. Young
Scotland

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WELFARE AND THE DIALECTIC

Dunayevskaya's discussion in the June issue about the *Ethnological Notebooks* of Marx and "the negation of the negation" in relation to women's liberation is not clear. If what she means is to stress the development within itself of the force and reason of revolution, I think every group could use that, and getting into specifics is on the agenda.

Here I concur with the importance of the "negation of the negation," where that means change within a subject. But just saying "negation of the negation" doesn't make it happen, any more than reading a grocery list fills your stomach. How does "the negation of the negation" and "negative self-relation" relate to what you are doing to give material (including intellectual) support to women's self-organization, youth self-organization, Black-Latino-Asian, self-organization, etc.?

New reader
California

Dunayevskaya has clearly established the necessity to ground all our discussion of women's liberation in the totality of Marxist-Humanism and its method. Look, for instance, at welfare "reform" and keep thinking of Raya writing "how total, continuous and global must the up-rooting be now?" The Republicans and their ilk want to uproot welfare too, but in order to destroy the subjects of revolution, whereas we aim to unchain people's full human development.

Susan Van Gelder
Detroit

Lou Turner's discussion in the last two issues on "what is the dialectic?" was a great contribution to overcoming the impasse in the revolutionary movement today. Working out the "freedom" you're fighting for is crucial. Or, as Turner put it, freedom "compared to what" - only to what you're opposed like the plantation mentality in the South - or the idea of freedom in absolute nega-

tivity that drives each moment of overcoming freedom?
Ironically, Clinton recently intimated the dialectic in counterrevolution that showed Turner's point. Clinton's remark to the Southern Governors Conference on turning welfare over to them revealed a deep foreboding about the consequences of the federal repeal of welfare. His commentary to them on his turning responsibility for welfare over to them was that it shows you have to "be careful what you ask for because you might get it." In other words, one has to face the consequences of capitalism as one's idea of freedom. Today's capitalist crisis is forcing us to redefine what we ask for.

Ron Brokmeyer
California

ZIMBABWE LABOR PARTY

The recent formation of the Zimbabwe Labour Party has been necessitated by lack of democracy in Zimbabwe as evidenced by rampant corruption and the widening gap between the rich and the poor. If this gap is allowed to grow wider, a violent change is inevitable.

The IMF/World Bank sponsored SAP (Structural Adjustment Programme) is doomed to failure as there is no political competition in the country to buttress this newly introduced economic competition. SAP has brought about untold suffering resulting in an increase in street kids, prostitution and crime. Opposition is stifled as the ruling Zanu (PF) controls state radio, television and daily newspapers. The minority whites, gays and lesbians, and Ndebeles are often used as scapegoats for the economic ills of the country. We are committed to correcting these anomalies. We appeal to your readers for contributions to help make us viable in defense of the economic and political interests of the workers, peasants and poor in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe Labour Party
PO Box BE 814
Belvedere, Harare
Zimbabwe

MARCH AGAINST RACISM

We are calling for a national demonstration against the racist burning of Black churches in the South. Over 75 churches have been bombed and the homes and offices of a number of activists in Chattanooga and other parts of the South attacked by arsonists this year alone. Yet there have been no major protests by either civil rights activists or church leaders, while the FBI and other agencies have been attacking the victims and threatening to arrest them, instead. We are calling on all progressives, anti-racists, church groups, human rights activists and the Black community to join us in Chattanooga, Tenn. on Saturday, Nov. 2, 1996 to send a strong message against racist violence in the South. Those interested in adding their voices can contact Lorenzo or Maxine at (423) 622-7614 for further details.

Ad Hoc Coalition Against Racism
Chattanooga, Tenn.

The North Texas town of Greenville has recently received media attention for the large number of arson fires involving churches and residences. A few months ago, a small group of Klan supporters came down from Harrison, Ark. just in order to stage a rally in the town. Most local people wished that the Klansmen had stayed home, but a few took them seriously and listened to their propaganda.

Concerned
Oklahoma

POST-MODERNISM AND POST-MARX MARXISM

I was surprised to read that Teresa Ebert has developed a critique of the "post-al" movement from a (however vulgar) Marxist perspective. As a teacher in the late '80s at Northern Illinois University, Ebert was pushing the very ideas she claims now to be against, post-modernity, post-feminism, and "post-structuralist assumptions about linguistic play, difference, and the priority of discourse." Her lateral move to an Engelsian brand of Marxism raises new questions about the theoretical ties between post-modernism and post-Marx Marxism. Both her former view and her current one deny the historic element of the "creativity of cognition." We haven't been "defeated" since the beginning of

patriarchy, but have been struggling and developing our revolutionary ideas all along.

Julia Jones
Berkeley

NEW LABOR STRUGGLES



I have an update on my piece in the August-September issue on the hotel workers strike here. When it was settled, the workers didn't get everything they wanted, but they were able to resist the introduction of piecework. Given that the hotel was trying to take away a lot of hard-won gains (with other hotels watching and eyeing their own workers conditions), it could be regarded as quite a success. Certainly it is a much better result than the recent settlement in the Irving strike in New Brunswick, where, after a 27-month strike, the workers voted to return and Irving gets to choose which strikers it takes back. Needless to say, many activists are losing their jobs.

Neil Fettes
Toronto

There are a number of issues that have to be addressed in SEIU Local 11's attempt to organize workers at the Japan-based, non-union New Otani Hotel. A number of the workers are afraid of losing their jobs and won't overtly support their pro-union co-workers. The weekly demonstrations that began last January are very conservative. I sometimes feel like a voice-less, non-thinking soldier as I hold my sign for an hour and endlessly repeat the same slogans. I would even prefer a few minutes of coordinated, silent walking to break the monotony. It's only when I become angry at people crossing our picket line and start yelling, "Boycott!" that I don't feel like part of a mechanical chorus. There is no room for any positive, spontaneous creativity.

Frustrated picket
Los Angeles

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Black/Red View

by John Alan

To visit Memphis, Tenn. could lure the visitor into his or her own private space and time, because that city arouses many memories from the past; not only memories from personal experience, like encountering a racist white cop on Beale St. during World War II, or leaving Memphis in a segregated train when Boss Crump ruled the city, but memories from everything you have heard or read about Memphis. Undoubtedly many of the white tourists, who are filling the bars and restaurants on "deghettoized" Beale St. have in their minds images and the sounds of African-American women singing W.C. Handy's "St. Louis Blues" in a 1920s Beale St. gin mill.

It is quite obvious that it is the memories of the Civil Rights Movement and the martyrdom of Dr. Martin Luther King that bring so many people to the Lorraine Motel where Dr. King was gunned down. People don't go there alone; a visit is a shared experience, they come by pairs or in groups and take pictures of each other.

The city fathers of Memphis, of whom many are now Black, have not restricted remembrances of the past to the Civil Rights Museum, the Lorraine Motel and Beale St.; they have also placed large metal plaques on poles around Memphis with biographical and historical information about Memphis' Black citizens.

A plaque commemorating Ida B. Wells is located in a poor Black neighborhood on a lot where a Black man was lynched in the early 1890s, but the information is only minimal. It says that the murder of that man started Ms. Wells on a lifelong crusade against lynching. The story is not that simple. Wells was actually driven from Memphis by a mob that burned down the office of the newspaper she owned and edited, because she had the courage to show that the terror of lynching was the force that kept the plantation system in operation.

I found no plaque memorializing Richard Wright's sojourn in Memphis. It would be quite appropriate to have such a plaque in Memphis' downtown library, marking the spot where Wright stood with a borrowed library card and his "fool-proof" forged note: "Dear Madam: Will you please give this n----- boy some books by H.L. Mencken." Wright's sojourn in Memphis was a relatively short three or four years, but they were the years of his coming of age, like it was for his generation of African-

Memphis then and now

American Southern migrants stopping in Memphis on their way North to Chicago.

But once we leave the realm of history and personal memories, the reality of many contradictions and anomalies rush in upon you. There is a white flight from Memphis to the all-white suburbs of northern Mississippi. These Southern whites have lived with African Americans all of their lives, but they can't tolerate Black majority political rule. Memphis now has a two term Black mayor, a Black police chief and African Americans are the majority on the city council and the school board.

However, this Black political majority in no way means that it can resolve the problem of wide-spread Black poverty. Forty percent of Memphis' Black population live below the poverty line and 68% of those who live above it are employed in low-paying service positions. In other words, Memphis' Black leaders, like Black political leaders in other American cities with large populations of poor and homeless citizens, reached the limit of "Black political empowerment." As Memphis mayor W.W. Herenton put it: "The biggest challenge in Memphis is turning [Black] political empowerment into economic empowerment."

Memphis' road to Black economic empowerment is supposed to start with a coalition of Black leaders and white businessmen working together to convince firms that discrimination hurts the pocketbook. How successful this project will be in ending Black poverty is very doubtful. But such a coalition does have the power to convey an ideology that capitalism can end poverty, even when high-tech American industrial cities are producing simultaneously, commodities and human poverty. Memphis may not be a ranking high-tech city, but it is moving in that direction.

As I was departing from Memphis, I remembered that across the street from the Civil Rights Museum and the Lorraine Motel there is a large sign: "IT'S A SHAM," urging that these two Memorials be given to the homeless. Natives of Memphis are apologetic and will say that the person who placed it there is irrational, but homelessness is a real problem in Memphis and it too is irrational. Could the person who placed the sign be saying that a March on Washington for the rights of poor people should be reorganized now?

Israel-Palestine eruption

(continued from page 1)

areas they poured into the streets and marched on Israeli army installations as well as the militarized outposts of Jewish settlers. Though the scale was reminiscent of the intifada of the 1980s, it soon became

clear that a very new situation was at hand. For instead of just throwing bottles and rocks at Israeli soldiers, the masses encouraged armed members of Yassir Arafat's police and security forces to fire back at the Israeli positions. In a few days, more than 50 Palestinians and close to 20 Israelis lay dead; in comparison, seven Israelis died in the first year of the intifada.

The sight of seeing armed Palestinians firing back at the Israelis sent shock waves through the government, which is now contemplating a host of repressive measures. For the first time since the 1967 war, it sent U.S.-supplied tanks and helicopter gunships into the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The revolt has for now quieted down, however, in large part due to pressure exerted by Arafat, who ordered his police and security forces to "prevent any further disturbances."

There is no question that the limitations of the Oslo accords have helped the authorities maintain control over the situation, at least for now. Providing the Palestinians with nominal control over isolated segments of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, while keeping Israeli control over strategic areas, settlements and major roads, has clearly worked against the Palestinians. Yet the Oslo accords have also introduced a new reality which threatens to take matters far beyond the confines envisioned by the rulers.

This can be seen in the instances of cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians which emerged during the revolt. At the height of the fighting, Palestinians sent an ambulance for a wounded Israeli soldier caught in the fighting in Nablus. In another incident, Palestinians rendered first aid to an Israeli soldier whose jeep had overturned near Jerusalem. Such acts would have been unthinkable just a few years ago.

What enabled them to occur is the growing recognition of the need for interethnic dialogue and cooperation between Jews and Palestinians. This was in the air even before the Oslo accords were signed, but it has gained new ground since then. It is this, even more than the Oslo accords themselves, which Netanyahu seeks to undermine and destroy.

His entire political career, like that of his mentors Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir, has been defined by violent opposition to the very idea of multiethnic cooperation between Jews and Palestinians. What has no doubt emboldened him to move so brazenly on this now is the setback in Bosnia, where the U.S.-brokered agreement that partitions the country along ethnic lines has sent a clear signal to the rulers of the world that destroying efforts at multiethnic cooperation is "permissible."

Netanyahu's pursuit of such policies places him in sharp opposition, not just to the Palestinians, but to many Israelis. As one report sent to *News & Letters* from Israel on Sept. 30 put it, "Israeli peace activists are using this opportunity to rally [against] Netanyahu....The air is thick with rallies, demonstrations, petitions, vigils, marches, and newspaper ads calling for a return to the peace process. Currently, the Left is out-shouting the Right, but that can quickly shift depending on who perpetrates the next act of aggression."

The discussions now underway in Washington between Netanyahu and Arafat, under the auspices of Clinton, are clearly aimed at defusing the revolt. Arafat is of use to the rulers, and obtains the "right" to join them at the negotiating table, only insofar as he can use his authority to keep the Palestinians in line. He is an expert at doing so in the past and he will surely try to do so again.

Israel says it wants "assurances" that the Palestinians will "refrain from violence to achieve their objectives." If this pledge of non-violence is broken, Netanyahu says, Israel will feel free to renege on its past agreements. It is not hard to see where this leads. Israel's repressive actions are bound at some point to lead to a further armed response from Palestinians. When that occurs, Netanyahu will have his excuse to formally suspend the peace process, something he has wanted to do all along.

The recent events have placed Israel-Palestine in a new situation, for it has revealed the severe limitations of the peace process as envisioned thus far. Yet nothing would be more wrong than to presume that we can now return to the conceptual universe which prevailed before Oslo.

To return to the old bankrupt politics of "Israel as enemy number one," after all that has transpired over the last several years would be nothing less than retrogressive. For it would mean skipping over the new which has emerged, and which provides the ground for transcending the deadends into which both the Palestinian and Israeli Left have fallen: namely, the perspective of a multiethnic struggle for liberation that transcends the boundaries of the narrow nationalism that has disfigured the freedom struggles in this region for so long.

As Marxist-Humanists, we have long argued that just as Israel has a right to exist, so do the Palestinians have a right to national self-determination. The development of our unique position on the Arab-Israeli conflict can be followed in the collection of "Raya Dunayevskaya's Writings on the Middle-East." (See special ad, opposite page.) The key to peace in the Middle East, we have insisted, lies in forging new relations of revolutionary dialogue and struggle in which the national aspirations of both Palestinians and Jews are acknowledged and developed. Though the acts of the Israeli rulers have once again placed this vision in jeopardy, it has never been more important to concretize it for our time.

—Oct. 1, 1996

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Southern Human Rights Organizing Conference

Oxford, Miss.—The Southern Human Rights Organizing Conference (SHROC) met at the University of Mississippi on Sept. 19-21. Driving through the campus past plantation-style fraternity houses and streets called "Confederate Drive" and "Rebel Road", one couldn't held but appreciate how SHROC and its primarily African-American, majority women participants challenged that white space where the very nickname of the college, "Ole Miss," is the name slaves often gave the wives of their slave masters.

Conference Coordinator Jaribu Hill framed the conference's purpose: "We have come to say that it's time to put an end to worldwide human rights abuses....Many of us are victims of human rights violations right here in America and we are here to say that the time to raise our concerns is now!" Over 150 participants came to do just that at three plenaries and 11 panels that took up capital punishment, workers' and prisoners' rights, environmental justice, and domestic terrorism.

The keynote address was given by Rev. C.T. Vivian, co-founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). His talk was followed by Jaribu Hill's Call to Conference and a plenary on "Framing the Issues." Sarah White's powerful talk there of her experience organizing workers in the catfish industry in the Delta was referred to at workshops and plenaries throughout the three-day meeting.

The Fannie Lou Hamer/James Chaney Freedom Awards Celebration on Friday night placed the Conference in the context of the history of struggle that shows Black masses as vanguard in U.S. history and today. This was revealed vividly when Charles Tisdale, editor of the *Jackson Advocate*, dedicated his award to his mother, Winnie Tisdale.

Mr. Tisdale told of when the Ku Klux Klan in their north Alabama town came to take his brother away for looking directly into the face of a white woman. His mother killed three Klansmen while their next-door neighbor, the sheriff, did nothing. Not another word was said until a race riot in 1945, when the KKK leader came up behind her and said, "Don't you know, we're running all the n----- out." She pulled out her pistol, stuck it in his face and said, "Run me!" and chased him several blocks. He was laughed out of town.

In the panel on domestic terrorism, John McIntyre of McComb, Miss., spoke of how his son was murdered in an Illinois courthouse holding cell. His own business and home in McComb were burned while the white firefighters watched. He spoke of how "Everyone in the Black community backed away," and no one from the county came to his fundraiser. Yet, he declared, "I can't forget. And I will fight anyone who fights me."

When Brenda and Wanda Henson, two white lesbians who started Camp Sister Spirit in Ovett, Miss., spoke, they showed the affinity between their struggles. Brenda told of how the over 100 violent acts against them by known perpetrators have never been prosecuted; how, like McIntyre, they had no local support even from gays and lesbians in Mississippi: "If not for our friends nationally, we would have been murdered." She said they had learned from the South's Black farmers, who had protected their land, so they let it be known they were not going without a fight.

Because this conference actually brought together academics, lawyers and grassroots activists, each workshop was special. At the Workers' Rights workshop, one worker spoke of his experience in what he called "the chicken plantation." His story set the ground for discussion. This was also true in the workshop on Environmental Justice, where African-American women spoke of pollution pervading their communities and killing people.

A sizable contingent at the Conference advocated Black nationalism, calling in particular for the use of the UN as a forum to advance the cause of an independent Black nation in the South, and saying that Black people can only be freed by themselves and needed the power a Black homeland would provide.

At the workshop on Domestic Terrorism, the Black nationalists were challenged by Loretta Ross from the Center for Human Rights Education in Atlanta. "We say 'no' to racism and 'no' to homophobia," she said, "but we end up in a permanently reactive mode and we're not advancing any ideas of our own." While not necessarily speaking for the majority present, she raised the need to rethink nationalism when society is more globalized than ever, and "the only thing contained by borders now is human beings, not money or commodities or ideas."

In many of the workshops, women outnumbered men four to one. Feminism became explicit at the plenary on Saturday morning titled "Down Home Blues." Towards the end of Black Workers for Justice activist Ashaki Binta's talk, after repeatedly emphasizing the need for a new strategy to deal with the racist anti-worker South, she touched a controversy in the Black community.

Binta said, "The Million Man March was important, but if there's going to be a new movement, it can't be based on male chauvinism or patriarchal relations. We need a women's movement in the South, organized and conscious of itself as women oppressed as women, if we're going to get anywhere." Her talk had been interrupted by applause, and was again at this point.

The SHROC brought together rank-and-file workers and grassroots community activists with lawyers and academics. Many who came are revolutionaries. It had plenty of contradictions, some of which were confronted. It was important and took on additional meaning because it occurred in an epoch of extreme retrogression in the middle of the deep South.

—Terry Moon and Franklin Dmitryev



Artists' for Survival

Confrontation and tragedy in Iraq: Kurds, Saddam, and the U.S.

(Continued from page 1)

side do not interfere with its global economic or political interests.

By Sept. 10, Barzani's Iraqi-backed forces had overrun Salaimaniya, the last stronghold of Talabani's PUK. This meant that, more than at any time since the protected enclave was set up in April 1991, Saddam has a free rein in the North. Sensing this even amid the cruise missile attacks, Saddam's press began to crow: "Kurdistan will fall like ripe fruit."

THE TRAGEDY IN KURDISTAN

As Saddam's forces moved into Erbil alongside those of the KDP, Iraqi police arrested hundreds of oppositionists, concentrating especially on Communists, military deserters, and Turkmen groups. Barzani's KDP did not even give these allies of the Kurds any warning that Saddam's forces were approaching. Saddam's police have infiltrated the region, and are keeping Kurdish and other opposition figures under surveillance with the aid of computers and files seized in Erbil from the Iraqi National Congress, a coalition of opposition groups. Anyone on those lists, as well as anyone who even worked for a UN humanitarian agency after 1991, is now in mortal danger.

But the deep sense of betrayal and hopelessness which is setting in among the Kurds today is not alone due to fear of Saddam's forces. It stems as well from the sobering fact that it is one of their own, Barzani, who is now working with Saddam.

This is the same Saddam who, from his earliest days as a gunman for the Ba'ath Party in the 1950s, tortured and killed Communists, Kurds, and Shiites. This is the same Saddam who, once in power, had 300,000 Kurds murdered by poison gas and other means in his 1988 "Anfal" campaign. This is the same Saddam who, in 1991, crushed the post-Gulf War Kurdish uprising, killing another 30,000 children, women, and men.

Massoud Barzani and other members of his family have been the most important resistance leaders in Iraqi Kurdistan since the 1930s, when Massoud's father, Mustapha Barzani, fought the British, who had to send in the Royal Air Force. In 1946, with Russian backing, he declared a short-lived Kurdish Republic in the North. Then, in the days of the leftist Qassim regime in the late 1950s, Barzani was invited to help work out a form of Kurdish autonomy, something which was never allowed to come about.

Later, when Saddam's Ba'ath Party came to power, briefly in 1963 and then more permanently in 1968, the repression of the Kurds became more severe. Ba'athist ideology is a crude form of right-wing Pan-Arabism

which justifies oppression at home in the name of anti-imperialism. Despite the Ba'athists' massacre and torture of thousands of members of Iraq's Communist Party, once one of the largest CPs in the Arab world, the Ba'ath regime was by the 1970s able to ally itself with Russia.

This prompted the U.S. and the Shah of Iran to give some aid to Barzani's Kurdish movement. But after a 1975 deal with Saddam, the Shah and the U.S. cut off Barzani. It was this betrayal, and the ensuing defeats, which led Talabani and others to break away to form the more leftist PUK, accusing the KDP of too close ties to the Shah and the U.S.

Saddam's horrific repressions of 1988 and 1991 seemed to bring the two Kurdish tendencies together. The KDP, now led by Massoud Barzani, and the PUK formed a joint administration, but the two factions shared state power in a way that too often excluded even debate from below. Thus, they prevented trade unions from organizing. They also allowed a wave of so-called "honor killings" of Kurdish women to be carried out by their male relatives, even giving these horrors legal sanction.

Then, beginning in 1994, a low-level civil war broke out in northern Iraq between the KDP and the PUK. For much of the period since 1991, the KDP has leaned toward Turkey, going so far as to work out a deal with the Turkish government to undermine the Kurdish movement inside Turkey. They even agreed to Turkish military incursions into Iraqi Kurdistan in pursuit of Turkish Kurd fighters.

Talabani and the PUK have in recent years drawn closer to Iran, betraying the overall Kurdish movement by allowing Iranian troops into territory they controlled in order to attack Kurdish resistance groups from Iran. As with Turkey, the Iranian government has repeatedly invaded and staged massacres in its Kurdish regions and its agents have assassinated Kurdish leaders abroad, most recently in an incident in Berlin in 1992, for which several Iranian officials are presently on trial in absentia before the German courts.

But in working out a military pact with Saddam Hussein, Massoud Barzani, whose own family was decimated by Saddam, has carried out a betrayal so deep that it is likely to undermine the Kurdish liberation movement for years to come. His rival, Talabani, whose own hands are by no means clean, assessed the situation correctly for once when he stated recently: "We have been militarily defeated by the Iraqi army, but never before have we been subjected to such a political victory over the Kurdish people" (*Le Monde*, Sept. 7, 1996).

That victory is of course Saddam Hussein's, and it is

something for which both Kurdish factions have at least some responsibility. For despite the severe limits the U.S. placed on their enclave in the North since 1991, it was a chance for the Kurds to begin to work out ideas and organization for the type of free Kurdistan for which they have fought for so many years. That opportunity was squandered by the KDP-PUK's engaging, not in debate and dialogue among themselves and with other tendencies, but in joint authoritarian rule followed by a narrowly militaristic struggle for power.

U.S. 'VITAL INTERESTS'

Bill Clinton, like Saddam, claimed victory after their brief confrontation, saying that he had protected the U.S.'s vital interests in the region by forestalling an Iraqi move southward, even though Saddam had made no moves in that direction. One goal of the U.S. is to contain both Iran and Iraq, the two largest powers in the region, plus, as always, to stop any attempt at revolutionary change from below anywhere in the region. Let us look for a moment at what the U.S. is protecting.

Kuwait, the oil sheikdom the U.S. wants to protect from Iraq, is a nearly absolute monarchy. It is to protect that regime that Clinton has sent 3,000 U.S. troops for border "exercises."

Saudi Arabia, the reactionary oil kingdom where women are forbidden even to drive cars, has experienced two fundamentalist terrorist attacks in the past year, the most recent of which resulted in the deaths of 19 U.S. airmen at a base in Dhahran.

Yet another example of the fragility of the U.S.-backed kingdoms and sheikdoms which border Iraq can be seen in this summer's food riots in Jordan, a country which has no oil.

Turkey, another U.S. ally, also without any oil deposits, has suffered huge economic losses from the UN embargo on Iraq. Turkey, which has just sent 20,000 more troops to fight a rebellion in its Kurdish region, hinted that it supported Saddam's moves into Kurdistan.

Most of the U.S.'s European and Arab allies are keeping their distance at a time when the U.S. has done little to separate itself from Israel's reactionary, anti-Arab Netanyahu government.

PERMANENT CRISIS OF SADDAM'S IRAQ

Saddam Hussein has undoubtedly gained from his moves into Kurdistan. At the same time, however, the Iraqi people as a whole are suffering as never before. Their overall standard of living is below that of the 1950s. Despite the country's vast oil reserves, second only to those of Saudi Arabia, Saddam's military adventures, first the 1980-88 war with Iran, and then the 1990-91 Gulf War, have led to millions of deaths, economic sanctions, and the destruction of the economy.

Even in its earliest days in the 1960s, the Ba'ath regime had an extremely narrow social base, mainly among the Sunni Arab middle classes and military officers. Excluding the Kurds (24% of the population) and the Shiite Arabs (over 50%) from real power, the Ba'athists have always ruled through terror and torture. Saddam has by now narrowed the regime's base to such an extent that most of the top leaders are his close relatives.

As did the Kurds, the mainly Shiite Arab population of the South staged an uprising in 1991, which was crushed brutally by Saddam as the U.S. and its allies watched. Since then, Saddam has committed outright genocide against the Shiite Marsh Arabs of the river delta region.

As much as the U.S. talks of getting rid of Saddam Hussein, however, it and its allies would rather have him weakened but still in power than overthrown by leftists or by any process which would allow the Shiites of the South or the Kurds of the North to develop real autonomy. Kurdish autonomy would threaten Turkey; Shiite autonomy would destabilize the oil sheikdoms and kingdoms, while a mass revolution would destabilize the entire region!

That is why the Gulf War allies allowed Saddam to crush the 1991 uprising. At that time, the worldwide movement against the Gulf War also remained largely silent on Saddam's repression, and except for some small tendencies such as News and Letters Committees, refused to organize support for the revolutionary uprisings of 1991.

Since those 1991 events and the more recent ones in Bosnia and Haiti, we have seen the limits of an anti-interventionism which, bereft of a philosophy of liberation, separates the issue of anti-imperialism from that of support for those who resist class, national or gender oppression. Those limitations continue to impact attempts by emancipatory forces the world over to challenge today's retrogressive reality.

Oct. 1, 1996

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

bilization of the people, it has turned out to be an empty shell, a crude travesty of war, famine, disease and ignorance. The Arab bourgeoisie has passed over the nation for the race and has given the tribe the rule of the state.¹

At independence from Britain in 1956 the Arab bourgeoisie comprised the commercial traders, educated politicians, colonial officers and leaders of Sufist Islamic sects like the Khatimiyya and Samaniyya. As a class they were conservative, nationalistic and underdeveloped. Their conservatism came from Islamic teachings. This was reinforced by their positions as religious leaders within Arab and Muslim communities. Their narrow nationalism was limited to the Arabs in Khartoum and the major cities. They recognized but looked down on the nomadic Arab tribes. They had virtually no contacts with the South. It was contemptuously thought of as heathen, pagan, and black. The South was a reservoir for slaves and ripe for salvation through Islam. Its underdeveloped status stemmed from the British stifling of most aspirations beyond petty trades and small scale agriculture.

The Arab bourgeoisie never reoriented the economy away from its colonial path. It simply "took exclusive control of social and political power."² Of 800 positions vacated by the British only 8 went to Southerners.

Over the past forty years both private and state-capitalism have advanced as ceaselessly as the Sahara Desert. Mechanized farms controlled by wealthy landowners have increased dramatically. The results have been the constant expropriation of fertile lands from peasant farmers, pastoralists, and nomads. The war has sped up this process of capital accumulation.

Much of the financing for expansion has come from Islamic banks. This has helped bring about the rise of a class of financial capitalists cloaked in Islamic ideology.

But the primary capitalist expropriating wealth and dominating the Sudanese people is the state. The state regulates the prices of commodities, controls farms such as the 2 million acre Gezira scheme and governs the financial sector. It has formed neo-colonial joint ventures with foreign capital to extract raw materials. It has aided the private agricultural capitalist sector by intensifying the pace of Mechanized Farming Schemes in rural areas. Sales from its two cash crops, cotton and gum arabic, have fallen drastically from \$450 million in the 1980's to \$53 million in 1993-94.³ At the same time it has, over the past 20 years, greedily swallowed the \$16 billion wad

Sudan: famine of ideas

of debt it now chokes on.

The massive debt and the state's mad scramble to get out of hock and sustain itself are contributing mightily to the misery at the bottom. The state is fighting desperately to hold onto the reported 400 million barrels of oil exploited by Chevron in Bentiu in the South. It needs the water potential for state run farms from the Jonglei canal, also in the South. Under the misguidance of the IMF it has devalued the Sudanese pound, deflating the already meager living standards of ordinary Sudanese. It has resorted to using slave labor on its plantations to extract the maximum in surplus value.

The state is under the iron fist of the military. Officially, military-owned companies operate in transport, commerce and industry. They are well financed and are given import licenses and tax holidays.⁴

Military men have found opportunities in financing slave raids. Besides satisfying their violent urges by raping women caught in slave raids, soldiers and *murahalin* (militia men) have found slave raids quite lucrative. Dinka women and children are typically ransomed back to their families for about \$500. Or they can be sold to wealthier Arabs for about the same price. With the annual pay for soldiers at about \$500, is it any surprise that they encourage raids in which 100 to 200 or more Southerners are captured? Many of these slaves are channeled onto state run farms.

Forty years of Arab bourgeois rule has left hideous marks on the body of Sudanese society: an infant mortality rate of 100 per 1000 births; 1 doctor for every 10,000 people; only 48% of the population with access to safe drinking water; 57% of adult males and 88% of adult females illiterate; over 90% of people living in poverty; oil shortages; food shortages; official unemployment of 30%; and inflation of 150% annually.⁵ It has left a war costing \$2 million a day. This is in a land with an annual per capita income of \$310. This is in a country in which 10 million desperate souls have to depend on the state's \$3.60 monthly support. This is in a land where 80% of the people are subsistence agriculturalists.

This class has manipulated the twin ideologies of Arabism and Islam to throttle the national identity. Arabic language, literature and culture are promoted over all other cultures and languages. Islam is cynically used as a means to advance social and economic status. In short, these two ideologies are tools for riveting down the Arab bourgeoisie's grip on wealth and power.

—Robert Reed

1. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1965), p. 148.

2. Tony Barnett and Abbas Abdelkarim, eds., *Sudan: State, Capital and Transformation* (London: Croom Helm, 1988), seminar held at the School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich, England, July 1984, p. 3.

3. Sudan Update, Internet, Vol. 6 No. 14 [09/12/95] from Peter Verney Sudan Update @GN.APC.ORG

4. Alex de Waal, "Starving Out the South," in M.W. Daly and Ahmad Alawad Sikainga, eds., *Civil war in the Sudan* (London: British Academic Press, 1993), p. 169.

5. Ibid, p. 170.

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Editorial

'Defense of Marriage': election year fraud

The craven nature of election year politics in the U.S. revealed its anti-human ideological depths last month, when the punitive immigration bills and the scrapping of even a semblance of welfare, coincided with a double-barreled Senatorial assault on gay and lesbian lives. The overwhelming passage of the "Defense of Marriage Act" (DOMA), which defines marriage as being for heterosexuals only, was joined with the defeat of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which means lesbian and gay employees can still be fired for sexual orientation in over 40 states.

The shameful nature of this legislation was obvious even to the shallow Bill Clinton. He returned from a four-day campaign tour to sign DOMA into law under cover of the deepest night. It could not be more obvious: The rulers are telling us that gay and lesbian people should live their lives in the shadows of the closet, in the shadows of death from inadequate health care, and in the shadows of a society which refuses full participation to people because of who they love.

Pat Buchanan was roundly criticized in the press for his "cultural war" against homosexuality in the last presidential election year. Dole's slick Republican Convention attempted to muzzle Buchanan's stridency. But apparently what was really being criticized by Dole and others was Buchanan's too transparent tone, not the war itself, for the battle he declared is now fully engaged (See "War on lesbians," page 11).

Thus, Buchanan's proclamation that "in a healthy society, homosexuality will be contained, segregated, controlled, and stigmatized" seems to underlie all aspects of the 1996 campaign. DOMA's vicious scapegoating is meant to "contain, segregate, control, and stigmatize" lesbians and gays, but the same string of words defines what is happening to the poor, the immigrants, the prisoners, the welfare recipients, and communities of color. Increasingly, the most intimate relationships come under the prying eyes of legislative disapproval, while capitalism's tyrannical hold over workers' lives regulates us by the "invisible" sharp talons of economic coercion.

The draconian welfare bill, for instance, encodes the retrogressionism of the religious Right, giving \$400 million to states that teach abstinence as the exclusive mode of birth control. The welfare bill also promotes an invidious competition, awarding \$20 million each to the five states that most sharply reduce "illegitimate" births without increasing abortion rates. This language of "illegitimacy" is insulting to all mothers and children caught

in the vise of its reproach. It also reinforces racism and sexism, and is in tune with DOMA, under which no child of a gay or lesbian couple could ever be "legitimate."

One should not be fooled by this desire for abstinence and "legitimacy": the "lawmakers" want children as future expendable "resources" for industry and militarism, and as targets for the indoctrination of capitalist ideology.

One sign of this is the rulers' willingness to capitulate to their religious allies. Groups like the Christian Coalition eagerly supply ideological justifications for cementing social inequities, and blame the poor and gays and lesbians for all ills of society. Thus, election rhetoric about giving public money to private religious schools is not only an abandonment of the inner cities, but a way to encourage authoritarian "virtues" while attempting to inure the young to propaganda.

The *Communist Manifesto* still rings loudly almost 150 years later: "The bourgeois claptrap about the family and education, about the hallowed co-relation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the action of modern industry, all family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labor."

The rhetoric behind defeating ENDA is more "bourgeois claptrap," denying the humanity of gay and lesbian people and attempting to keep them cowed and silenced. This is the industrial equivalent of the infamous military "compromise" of "Don't ask, don't tell." But the lack of any large-scale response to this congressional and presidential electioneering with human lives also reveals some of the contradictions in the freedom movements.

Why have lesbian and gay community leaders consis-

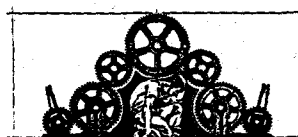
tently placed so much faith in Clinton, or the court system, or other reformist means? A misplaced confidence in mild reformism and social gradualism, coupled with the limitations of electoral politics, often means the loss of militancy and resignation to the "lesser of two evils."

The struggles for immigration rights, welfare rights, and les/bi/gay rights don't seem to recognize their commonalities. Why isn't there a consistent outcry about the inhumanity of attacks on welfare and immigration from the gay and lesbian community?

DOMA, by setting states' marriage regulations against each other, may do what the sham of states' rights always does: it multiplies the sites of the legal battles, creating too many fronts on which to exhaust the resources of those who are struggling for the crumbs of reform.

The welfare bill, the immigration bill, DOMA and ENDA define the ideology of 1996: contempt for human beings is held in higher esteem than love. The rulers' attempts to domesticate ecstasy must be met with a philosophy of revolution that upends the "traditional values" of exploitation and brutality.

The regulation of marriage—and the hypocrisy around it—is becoming total. DOMA defines marriage as "one man and one woman," basing this on biblical language. Lesbians can't marry, women on welfare are practically forced by the state to marry men, legal immigrants can only afford to bring their spouse if they are among the bourgeoisie, while gay men cannot use their relationships as a basis for citizenship. While the conservatives may try to remove any semblance of human content from human relations, simultaneously launching cynical election year hatred against the poor and the immigrant, it is incumbent on people to raise their voices, action and thought for a genuine alternative.



'Socialist labor' — a step backward

by Dave Black

Editor's note: Over the summer and into September, British workers have staged a series of 24-hour and 48-hour strikes, rattling both the Tory government and the now Clintonized Labor Party. Workers have repeatedly shut down the London Underground (subway) and occasionally parts of the national railways. At issue is the government's refusal to implement a promised decrease in the work week from 38.5 to 37.5 hours.

Postal workers have gone out again and again to protest a plan to privatize the Royal Mail, and in opposition to Alan Johnson, their sellout union leader. Prime Minister John Major has responded to the strikes with typical arrogance, calling the workers "dinosaurs" for failing to recognize economic "reality." In the following article Dave Black in Britain critiques the new Socialist Labour Party which seeks to build upon new labor stirrings.

Now that the British Labour Party has ditched its "commitment" to "common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange," a breakaway party has been launched by the president of the National Union of Miners, Arthur Scargill. He argues that his warnings back in 1984 that the Tories' plan to destroy the coal industry went unheeded by the leadership of the labour movement resulting in the sell-offs of public utilities and assaults on organized labour and civil liberties.

Scargill wants to galvanize the surviving warriors of the "Good Old Cause" with a pragmatic strategy: use the coming general election campaign to argue for "socialist policies" (and maybe stand candidates in safe labour seats), and recruit say 10,000 members to provide "leadership" to workers whose current leaders are sitting on discontent.

Scargill may in fact be onto something here. The bureaucrats and the established labour left don't want anyone rocking Labor Party head Tony Blair's election bandwagon with militancy inspired by workers in France and Germany, and London Underground drivers and postal workers are already hitting out with one-day strikes.

Scargill's Socialist Labour Party (SLP) was launched with just 1,250 members, and the composition of the party is mostly of seasoned militants: Left labour people; Trotskyists who can't find a home in 'New Labour'; Stalinists who fondly recall Scargill's support for the Communist crackdown on Solidarnosc in Poland; and anarcho-syndicalists who see in the SLP the possible revival of the tradition of the pre-World War I DeLeonist party of the same name. The SLP leadership, for its part, considers itself "in step" with similar European parties, including the left breakaways from Eurocommunism, in a "Three-and-a-half International."

Militants from the "new social movements" are conspicuous by their absence. Black membership is less than 2% and there is hardly anyone in the party under 25. The SLP does not ignore the new social movements of environmentalists and feminists, but patronizingly offers them "political leadership" while labeling them as "single issue" campaigners. In fact, groups such as Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth and the Freedom Network, have mobilized mass campaigns and take on a wide range of issues. Furthermore, the Green Party, whose policies are miles to the left of Tony Blair, have more members and vote-pulling power than the SLP. Scargill, however, has launched a rival left extra-parliamentary party without even trying to find common ground with the left-wing of the Greens. This betrays a

deep malaise in the old and not-so-old left: the absence in the "Changed World" of any new philosophy for new times which could also be a continuity with those traditions in our history which need renewing.

One of those traditions was the relationship between Karl Marx and the English Chartists in the mid-19th century. The Chartist Program of 1851 was in many respects far more radical than anything the 20th Century British Left have since dreamt of: abolition of taxation (!); expropriation of big landowners and capitalists; replacement of the standing army by a people's militia; state funding of workers co-ops, and much more.

But the program had nothing on struggles within the workplace and couldn't stop the Chartists from falling apart. For 1851, the year of celebration for industry and empire at the Great Exhibition, was not 1848, the year of Revolutions throughout Europe. Capitalism was entering a new stage; therefore, new thought and new forms of struggle and organization were needed.

A major split within Chartism took place over the question of trade unions and co-operatives. The issue was whether they could play a role in revolutionary transformation.

By all accounts, Marx in 1851 wasn't sure, but in 1854 he did tell a Chartist revival initiative that he thought English workers, having created the "productive powers of modern industry," now had to "free those wealth-producing shackles of monopoly, and subject them to the joint control of the producers, who, till now, allowed the very products of their hands to turn against them and be transformed into as many instruments of their own subjugation."

Over the following decade, Marx's perspective was transformed by the experience of a growing workers movement from practice as well as freedom struggles such as the American Civil War. Addressing the International Workingmen's Association in 1864, Marx praised the English workers for inspiring the world by carrying through the Ten Hours Bill. It was "the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class."

On workers co-ops, Marx appraised the "great social experiments" of the utopians which had "shown that production on a large scale, and in accord with the behests of modern science, may be carried out without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hands." In the light of the 1848-64 experience workers needed to be able to arrest the capitalist monopoly of productive forces to achieve freedom.

Today, following both the collapse of state-capitalist Communism and social democracy's universal embrace of neo-liberalism, there is no new stage of capitalism on the horizon, despite the talk of a "post-industrial" age driven by information technology. Nor, in the current context of "globalization," is there much mileage in Arthur Scargill's call to "re-open the mines and steel works" of 1960s Keynesian state-capitalism to put British history back on the "Road to Socialism."

That a phenomenon such as the SLP can be taken seriously shows how strong the pull of practice without theory is. The much-needed regroupment of oppositional forces will only come when leftists realize that, as *News & Letters* labour editor Felix Martin has put it, "We need to take our heads back."

History's battles are also fought in the realm of ideas. The alliance between would-be revolutionaries, who seem to have forgotten such "practical" lessons as the Spanish Revolution, and unreconstructed Stalinists shows how thoroughly that battle needs waging.

Activist history of Ecuadoran immigrants

We are immigrants who, moved by economic necessity, came to this large and distant country from a land of people who are simple, supportive of each other, and concerned with the struggle for survival. In a foreign land, we try to get together and support each other, to share sorrows, joys and hopes, so as not to lose our bearings. We try to continue being ourselves without getting absorbed by the dominant culture, which leads to anonymity and makes us lose consciousness of who we are, where we came from, and where we are going.

For a number of years, where we came from life permitted us to work for new ideals of justice and equality within the Union of Peasant Communities, a new mass organization which brought together about 70 communities. Ours is a town of 40,000 farmers, artisans, laborers and industrial workers. Remembering the history of our organization raises our spirits, and sharing that history makes us feel stronger and more firmly that we are going in the right direction.

Enlightened by the Gospel of the poor, we analyzed the reality in which we lived: divided, exploited, impoverished. We, therefore, decided to organize ourselves, and started with community stores and youth groups; then with women's groups and weaving and sewing collectives; later with day care centers and agricultural, sports and communications committees.

Our development was made possible by the support of the parish church and some non-governmental organizations. The idea was to move forward based on two pillars: faith and organization, theory and practice. We realized that we ourselves could express our thoughts and feelings. Coordinated by the communications committee, we developed murals, journals, writing workshops, and radio programs.

For the first time we held marches, such as on May Day, and other demonstrations and protests against exploitative situations such as hoarding of foodstuffs, alcoholism, loan sharking, and making people "disappear." We also struggled at a broader level as members of regional organizations.

Our reflecting on our activities and on the question of which way forward for an organized people, and the knowledge we gained of the struggles of other people, helped us to form a critical consciousness. In this way we went ahead firmly and motivated, and overcame difficulties for over a decade.

There are many causes, both internal and external, which provoked crises or got us stuck. We do not say the organization died, because thanks to the constant dedication of companeros, the union continues on its path. We point out some causes of the crises: the former Social Democratic government's policy of weakening the mass movements; rise in the cost of living; divisiveness caused by Left political parties; actions of religious sects; immigration to the U.S. of active members; lack of Marxist philosophy to guide us on what to do organizationally.

Youth

by Kevin Michaels

"There is one thing you must understand about our generation. We are destroyed." Emir Ganibegovic, 23, a Bosnian Muslim.

The Sept. 8 *New York Times Magazine* article "Lost Generation" provides a remarkable view into the lives of three Sarajevans, two young Muslim men and one young Catholic Croat woman. The lives of middle class comfort they led before the war, along with the assumptions they held about their country and the world at large have been swept away. What remains for them and their generation is to try and find a new beginning amidst the bitter shards of ethnic chauvinism.

The author of the article remarks that the shock of betrayal colors much of what the three friends, Emir, Ines and Nedim now say and do. From a nervous stutter to the chilling suspicion that a close friend, a Serb, knew that the war was approaching but fled Sarajevo without warning anyone, the conflict has had a most profound impact on their lives. Nothing was untouched; their education was disrupted, their homes shelled and damaged and friends volunteered to fight on the opposing side. Perhaps most poignant though, is the division amongst the three that the war's eruption into their lives has brought about. Emir served in the Bosnian army defending Sarajevo, while Nedim left the city for safety in Germany. An unspoken tension now exists between Nedim and his veteran friend.

The three's sense of betrayal extends to Europe itself. The visits to the West they enjoyed and Yugoslavia's autonomous position in relation to the Eastern bloc developed in them a sense of European solidarity. They felt that other European nations would stand by their multiethnic society. Yet they were rudely awakened to the fact that countries like France, which engages in racist harassment of its African immigrants, and Germany, which turns a blind eye to neo-Nazi violence against Turkish immigrants, would only offer lip service to their cause. This trust, like the trust the friends had in the bureaucratic political leaders of their country, proved to be an unfounded one.

The future of Emir, Ines and Nedim is uncertain, just as their attitude to the future of Bosnia is ambivalent. They are "openly contemptuous of the nationalist parties" which predominated in the recent elections, but only one of the three, Emir, expresses a desire to remain at home. The others want to emigrate.

By characterizing the three friends' attitudes as "contempt," however, the author seems to obscure any differences they may see in the three main parties. We don't know if the parties are indeed viewed in the same light, if some sympathy remains towards Itzebegovic's party, which, despite that it may have discarded the idea of a multiethnic society it once held, can't simply be lumped in with the Croat and Serb chauvinists. How the three felt about the smaller parties which still strongly champion multiethnicity and met with some success in the election despite official harassment is also left unsaid.

The new beginnings the friends are looking for in whatever they choose to do formed a question in my mind as I read these young people's story: who is Marx for them? Surely, in a state which identified itself as

Bosnian youths' world

Communist, Marx was taught in the classroom. Yet did they learn Marx's concept of the liberating, positive nationalism which he saw present in the 1848 revolutions, in the struggles of the Irish people against British colonialism and the fight for Polish national self-determination? Or was a version of Marx taught to them that the leaders could somehow reconcile with the nationalism used to stoke up the hatred which exploded across the Balkans in the 1990s? A new beginning for the nations of ex-Yugoslavia exists in Marx's Marxism.

Emir is right in saying that his generation is destroyed. But perhaps the struggle for a multiethnic society which he participated in, and which he and his two friends still hope for, is a new beginning which can transcend that destruction. That struggle was a new kind of nationalism which was, almost without exception, overlooked or dismissed by the West. The relationship between the Bosnian struggle for multiethnicity and Marx's vision of a liberatory nationalism is there for us to explore. It contains something for the three young Sarajevans and their generation to build on, to reconstruct a world out of the ashes of the national chauvinism that destroyed everything they knew.

Youth in Revolt



At Cal State University-Northridge, students and activists protested against former Klansman David Duke's presence on campus. Duke was paid \$4,000 to participate in a debate on affirmative action. Several students attempted to shut down the event and were beaten and teargassed by police.

An hour away from the U.S.-Mexican border, in the tourist town of Ensenada, a group of youth and young workers calling themselves Fuente Ecologista Juventud Conciente (Ecological Resource Conscious Youth) have been protesting for five years against the industrial dumping of waste into the ocean. People live in makeshift housing adjacent to the toxic creek into which the waste pours amidst a numbing stench. As the group stated: "Thirty years of trash, enough! We cannot wait one more year."

War against lesbians

The anti-woman "pro-family" movement reared its heterosexist face with new-found vigor this past month, waging a virtual war against people in same-sex relationships, especially lesbians, revealing the depth of the misogyny at the head of the "pro-family" table.

It is no wonder the Human Rights Campaign survey

Ebert denounces review

(Continued from page 2)

sary insistence on historical materialism. Postulating "breaks"...is itself part of this by now quite common strategy of marginalizing the "economic" in favor of the "cultural": think also of Raya Dunayevskaya's "Great Divide in Marxism," whom Cashdan follows, and Althusser's "epistemological break". It is only through such narratives of breaks...and the displacement of objective reality that it is possible to say that "Lenin's encounter with Hegel...paved the way for the November 1917 Russian revolution"...(*News & Letters*, p.5).

Social transformation, as I have argued, is not a matter of changing personal relations or of expressions of "creativity" and other individualistic practices. It does not depend on or derive from the autonomous subject and her personal freedom. Social transformation is rather the effect of fundamental changes in the structures of economic relations in history, that is, the structure of class contestations...

The consequences of Cashdan's feminism—and the politics of her calling my book "dangerous"—and the clear in the highlighted bar-line of the article: "Woman as Reason." As far as Cashdan is concerned, woman is "un-reason"—a spontaneous flow of emotions and sentiment, a nurturing that is an extension of nature. This is the kind of reactionary feminism that I have critiqued in my book. In the name of empowering women, it renders them helpless, uncritical creatures, who, at best, can simply narrate their sentiments in the anecdotes of personal relations and are unable to analyze and understand their situation as part of the historical series of class conflicts over material resources.

—Teresa L. Ebert

Panthers fight cop abuse

Chicago—My son was locked up for first degree murder three months ago when the police came to my house at 3 a.m. My son is 17-years-old, a senior at Tilden High School, and has a job downtown making pizzas.

The police came banging on my door and window saying that they wanted to talk to my son Tommy about one of his friends. When we let them in the house they said that they wanted to take him down to the station for questioning. Despite our demanding that they talk to him here, they searched him and took him to the station.

They questioned him about a gang murder. I told them that he was with me at the time that they said the murder took place, and they released him. Two days later they came back to pick him up again. This time they put him in a line up, though his lawyer told them not to, and some gang-bangers I.D.ed him.

My son was afraid that the police would beat him down at the station because they have a bad reputation of beating people. His trial date is Oct. 7.

This has happened to many young Black men in our neighborhood. But it increased in the months just leading up to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. One young Black man, Levert, was charged with a drive-by shooting that he didn't do. The police pulled guns and rifles on another young man, claiming that he had killed someone. Marshall, another young Black man, was framed for murder by these same police; he's in jail now. Another one, Fred, has gone to court for first degree murder on false charges. Edward was framed up on false charges when the police planted cocaine on him.

As soon as they released Levert, they picked him up and charged him again. Young Black men in our neighborhood can't walk down the street without being stopped, slammed up against the car, punched in the stomach, and taken to jail.

The area that I live in is in the 9th District, or Canyarea. But it's 7th District police who come into the 9th District to beat up these young men. One white woman cop, called Blondie, hides her badge and messes with them the worst. The cops mess with young people on the basketball court. Sheriffs from Cook County come in here to harass them.

The police in the district are only 30% Black. When the shift changes at 6 p.m., the white Irish cops come out. They say that "all the n-----s are asleep during the day" when the Black cops are on duty. On the night shift, the white cops stop and search young people, male and female. They make them take off their shoes, even in the snow, to search to see if they're carrying drugs.

Why are they doing this? Because they're racist white cops. That's why me and other parents are organizing with the Black Panther Party to do something about it.

—Black mother against the criminalization of Black youth

Prisoners reach out

Chowchilla, Cal.—On Aug. 16, Alice Quihuis (known as "Shorty Kiwis") died in Valley State Prison for Women of total kidney failure. She was 38 years old. She was in on a drug-related charge, i.e., a nonviolent crime, and was due to be released in November. She was a minimum security risk. She worked in the canteen until she got a gate pass and they put her on outside yard crew. She really enjoyed working.

She started having health problems. She thought the heat was causing problems with her blood pressure because she was swelling all over. She tried and tried to get help from the Medically Trained Assistants and was met with "elevate your feet when you get off work." She could barely walk because of the swelling, but was told to go to work.

She kept going to sick call, but they thought she was trying to get out of work. They kept writing her up because she couldn't get out of bed to go to work. After a while her feet swelled up and turned black. On Aug. 16, she collapsed in her room and was finally rushed to the hospital—where she died of kidney failure, a complete renal failure! She died!!

Dying from an altercation is one thing, but dying because you were completely neglected for something preventable is criminal! Its hard enough to hear about this kind of thing, but when it's someone I knew, talked to often and lived in the same "house" with, it really hits hard. It makes me angrier than ever!!! Alice's 21-year-old daughter just had a baby. Alice never saw her.

Why was her treatable condition ignored? Who are the criminals? Who will answer for this crime?

San Francisco—On Sep. 21 several hundred people of all ages and races gathered in Dolores Park to draw attention to the criminal injustice system. Called by the "kNOw INJUSTICE" coalition, the 5-hour program focused on all aspects of criminal "justice."

Speakers included a spokesperson for disabled prisoners, who announced a recent victory when the California court declared that prisoners are human beings and accessibility laws apply to them. Former prisoners spoke about the importance of community support for prisoners' rights.

Much was said about the money spent on prisons: that it comes directly from education budgets, that there are better, cheaper alternatives, and that the money does not go for taking care of prisoners but for prisons as institutions. Angela Davis spoke about the prison-industrial system.

California Coalition for Women Prisoners made a huge impact, both on the stage and at the literature table. An often asked question was what are the differences between women's and men's prisons.

—Dana Ryan and Ursula Wislanka

—Julia Jones

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The national and regional elections conducted in Bosnia Sept. 14 held no suspense in terms of which parties and candidates emerged victorious. By and large, the elections give a "veneer of democratic respectability to the ethnic cleansers," as one reporter observed beforehand. However, the process has also uncovered a surprisingly strong resistance to narrow nationalisms within Bosnia and even proven the resiliency of the desire for a multiethnic society.

Mandated by the Dayton accords, enforced by the NATO Implementation Force, and refereed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the elections were preceded by a speed-up in "ethnic cleansing": first, the forced abandonment of Sarajevo by some 60,000 Serbs. This was "ordered" by Momcilo Krajisnik, right-hand man to Radovan Karadzic, the fascist leader of the so-called Republika Srpska (RS). Krajisnik was elected from the RS to one of the three seats now comprising the Bosnian national presidency.

After thugs forced Serbs to leave Sarajevo, there followed attacks against refugees elsewhere in Bosnia, primarily Muslims, who tried to return to their previous homes under terms of the Dayton accords, which provid-

French support immigrants

As the French returned from their vacations in September, a new round of verbal battles between labor and the conservative government over its austerity measures seemed to presage more labor struggles this fall. "The government has completely forgotten what happened in December 1995," stated a leader of the new SUD-PTT unions, referring to last year's mass strikes (*Le Monde*, Aug. 23, 1996).

Earlier, in the dead of August, the police were ordered to break up a months-long protest by over 200 Africans threatened with deportation under France's new draconian immigration laws. Over the summer, a group composed mainly of Malians had been given sanctuary in a Paris church, but on Aug. 23 police moved in, arresting everyone.

The Africans were not alone, however. Hundreds of French citizens have been involved in nearly daily support actions. To the government's surprise—it had thought to take advantage of the vacation period to sneak its repressive policies through—thousands rallied in Paris on the day of the arrests, and even more attended several other demonstrations, including 15,000 who turned out on Aug. 28.

A few days later, most of the Africans were released into legal limbo once gain, 49 were given legal status, and a few were deported. In early September, a poll showed that a majority of the French people held a favorable attitude toward the protesters.

Also in August, several neo-Nazis confessed and were arrested, six years after they had severely vandalized a Jewish cemetery in Carpentras in order to "celebrate" Hitler's birthday. The same gang was also linked to the murder of an Arab man. For his part the neo-fascist leader Jean-Marie Le Pen called the Carpentras outrage a "banal incident," later also stating that he believed in "racial inequality." Le Pen's National Front regularly receives over 15% of the vote.

Multiethnic desire alive in Bosnia

ed for such returns but did not back them up with NATO soldiers. These attacks presaged the pre-election voter registration fraud carried out by separatist Croats and Serbs, who packed the voter lists in Srebrenica, Zvornik, Brcko and other places where Muslims had been in the majority before the murderous genocidal campaigns of ethnic cleansing.

Under the Dayton accords, Bosnians could choose to register and vote in their former homes. To foreclose any chance that Muslims might regain any control in RS, the thugs in charge forced thousands of refugee Serbs to register in their "ethnic homeland," and registration lists showed double and triple the number of Serbs that had lived there originally. One analyst described the fraud as "the continuation of ethnic cleansing by other means," and because the stacking of local rolls was so blatant, the OSCE quickly postponed local municipal elections.

The three nationalist parties—the Serb Democratic

Party (SDS), the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) and the Muslim-dominated Party of Democratic Action (SDA)—through their control of regional authorities and police, stamped out nearly all political opposition. This was true even in the more "open" areas of the Muslim-Croat Federation (MCF).

Haris Silajdzic, who ran against the SDA and challenged Bosnian president Alija Izetbegovic's exclusionism of non-Muslims and increasing reliance on Islamic fundamentalists, was harassed and attacked by SDA thugs during the campaign. Silajdzic, who was Prime Minister and had worked with Izetbegovic, left to form the Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina which is inclusive of Serbs and Croats as well as Muslims. While Izetbegovic got the most votes and therefore won chairmanship of the three-man presidency, Silajdzic won 14% of the Muslim vote.

More importantly, in the RS, Miladen Ivanic won nearly one-third of the votes, as against Krajisnik's two-thirds. Ivanic was supported by the Democratic Patriotic Bloc and the Union for Peace and Progress, a coalition more open to cooperation with the MCF.

In the national election for a joint parliament, two-thirds of the 42 seats were reserved for the MCF and one-third (14) for the RS. While the SDA won 16 seats and the separatist HDZ won seven, two smaller parties made inroads. Silajdzic's Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina won two seats, and the Joint List of Social Democrats—a coalition of five parties from Tuzla favoring a multiethnic state—won three. Even more startling, Izetbegovic's SDA won three seats of the 14 seats open in the RS.

The elections in Bosnia had nothing to do with any kind of democracy. Those who defied the dominant nationalist parties, which won overall, were made to pay the price, from the mayor of Banja Luka who was sacked, to the rank-and-file Bosnians who oppose the reigning nationalists. As one Serbian said during the summer election campaigns: "Below the surface, under the repression, we believe we can reject this nationalism...We hope we can survive the peace and create democracy."

German labor actions

In September, the conservative Kohl government in Germany rammed a series of anti-labor measures through parliament, including laws raising the retirement age from 60 to 63 and lowering sick pay from 100% to 80% of regular pay. As the vote approached, workers continued their mass actions begun last spring.

On Sept. 7, over 200,000 demonstrated in six cities against Kohl's benefit reductions. In Berlin, where 60,000 came out, the established leadership was confronted by a new militant Retail, Banking, and Insurance Union (HBV) whose contingent of 1,000 asked "What can we expect from the German Federation of Unions (DGB), when it is always sitting down with Kohl?" HBV speakers also accused the DGB of ignoring "the unemployed, welfare recipients, and immigrants."

In Leipzig, union women raised the old slogan, "Wir sind das Volk" (We are the people), which hundreds of thousands had made their cry as they toppled the East German Communist regime in 1989. Promising a "hot autumn," unions have called for another day of action on Oct. 10. (Quotes from *Die Tageszeitung*, Sept. 26, 1996).

From international statement...

We are 105 delegates coming from 16 countries in Asia, America and Europe, representing various migrant workers' organizations, migrant support groups, trade unions, women's groups, human rights organizations and religious bodies. We have come together, Aug. 28-Sept. 1, in Seoul, Korea for the international migrants workshop, with the theme "Migrant Workers Challenging Global Structures."

We recognize that in Asia alone, there are an estimated 15 million migrant workers (documented and undocumented). Women migrant workers constitute an increasing percentage of this.

We are gravely concerned that globalization is leading to profit-driven economies that thrive on cheap and docile labour, especially of women. In turn these have resulted in the erosion of human values, commodification of people (especially migrant workers), disintegration of societies, families and communities, racism, xenophobia, unsustainable lifestyles, and the degradation of the environment.

We reaffirm our position that migrant workers, whether documented or undocumented, have rights as workers and as human beings. We hold governments accountable in providing decent employment for the people, and responsible for abetting the forces of globalization.

We commit ourselves to:

- Intensify the migrants' campaign against globalization.
- Continue and strengthen the migrant action alert mechanism to expose blatant violations of migrants' human rights.
- Conduct a regional campaign on the issue of violence against women migrant workers.
- Encourage trade union and labour movements in each country to develop a migrant workers' agenda.
- Pressure governments to provide decent employment to the people.

—Information from Women of Color Resources Center, chisme@igc.apc.org.

General strike in Argentina



Millions participated in a 36-hour general strike in Argentina, beginning at noon Sept. 27, called by the country's three large union confederations in order to protest rising poverty and unemployment. "The only (economic) growth in Argentina is that of poverty" was one of the slogans, with as many as 90% of the workforce closing down buses, trains, airlines, schools, hospitals, businesses and government offices. Millions had previously participated in a 24-hour strike Aug. 8.

Unemployment stands at 17.1%, while government economic policies have until recently been shaped by Economic Minister Domingo Cavallo, who was schooled in reactionary "free market" doctrines while studying at the University of Chicago. The fifth general strike since Carlos Menem was elected president in 1989, this was also the largest one to date.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958), *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as American Civilization on Trial concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her recreation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the *Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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25¢

High-tech ups intensity of labor



(I am turning over this month's "Workshop Talks" over to David L. Anderson.—John Marcotte)

Some intellectuals think that technology, the new "information age," will save this world. But we are not living in any "post-industrial" world. We are living the ultimate consequences of capitalism's logic of dead labor dominating living labor. The computer is just a new form of that.

Toys-R-Us built a brand new high-tech warehouse. They moved out of the inner city to the countryside, where they got tax breaks because the high-tech was supposed to create jobs. But not only did they not hire one more person, it has created fewer jobs. Because of technology they don't even need a big warehouse space. The merchandise comes in and goes out the same day. One person loads two trucks as the merchandise comes down the conveyors.

The computer in no way frees you. It does not make for leisure time, it makes for intensity of labor. To do the simplest task, you have to follow precise steps one after the other, in proper order. It is all coming down the conveyor and you get two from one truck, four from another, and it is harder to stack and put away.

At the job site, you get a hand-held keyboard which directs every task. We used to be able to break down and put away merchandise as we saw fit. Now everything has a certain rigid order, a certain plan, or nothing gets

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

Sudan: pitfalls of religious consciousness



Editor's note: We continue the series of articles on the Sudan by Robert Reed in this issue. See the August-September and October issues of N&L for his earlier articles—Lou Turner.

In *Towards the African Revolution*, written in 1960, Frantz Fanon stated, "The deeper I enter into the cultures and political circles [of Africa] the surer I am that the great danger that threatens Africa is the absence of ideology."¹

But the absence of ideology is not the problem in Sudan. There is an ideology, an all pervading one. It is Islam. As the leader of Sudan's National Islamic Front (NIF), Hassan al-Turabi stated, "There is a vacuum now. That vacuum is being filled by an Islamicist spirit."² And what is this Islamicist spirit?

The word *Islam* itself means *submission and surrender* to the will of God. The essence of things is to submit to God, "to Whom all those in heaven and earth have already surrendered, whether willingly or unwillingly..."³ And submission must be brought out through fear of God. The 'ultimate expression in fear of God' is *la ilah ila Allah*. Submission and fear. Of God? Or of the State? Is this the Islamic spirit al-Turabi speaks of?

But what if one does not want to submit? What if one has no fear of God? Then one must be made to submit, to become a slave of God.

"The rationale of such servitude (slavery) is to be found in the principle of reciprocity (*al-mu'awadah*). If an individual is invited to become the slave of God but refuses, such refusal is symptomatic of ignorance that calls for a period of training. The individual prepares to

(Continued on page 8)

1. Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution* (New York: Grove Press, 1968), p. 186.
2. Bill Berkeley, "The Longest war in the World," *New York Times Magazine*, March 3, 1996, p. 59.
3. Mahmoud Muhammad Taha, *The Second Message of Islam* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987), p. 113.

ON THE INSIDE

From *The Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya* • Hungary's 1956 Revolution page 4
Philosophic Dialogue • Inheritors of Althusser's vulgar materialism page 5
Editorial • Nobel awards reflect revolt in Indonesia and East Timor page 10

Rage of the poor, voter indifference promise shaky term for Clinton



Police slaying of Black motorist sparks St. Petersburg, Fla. outrage.

by Olga Domanski

The dullest election campaign in memory that finally ended on Nov. 5 could be forgotten as no more than a national embarrassment were it not for what it revealed about the alarming new point we have reached in this country. For what Dole and Clinton represented was no mere Tweedledum and Tweedledee, both vying for the center, the kind of non-choices the Republican and Dem-

ocratic Parties have always represented. Rather, this year saw such a drastic move in tandem to the Right, where the Christian Coalition sat back counting up its gains, that it points to a frightening future.

There is no question that, while Clinton's victory was as far from a "mandate" as it could be, given that the 48% turnout was the lowest ever, it did represent revulsion against Newt Gingrich's "Contract on America" which had already set in stone such draconian measures as the so-called Welfare Reform and Immigration bills.

The slashing of food stamps and welfare benefits, sure to throw 1.1 million more children below the poverty level, was so vicious that it brought forth

the protest of even Clinton's close supporter, Marion Edelman, head of the Children's Defense Fund. The blatant immigrant bashing brought forth the largest Latino civil rights demonstration and march in U.S. history.

It's no mystery why two years of Gingrich's rule over the House of Representatives have made his name and face one of the most hated in the country. That the

(Continued on page 9)

Women's march: 'Hand in hand in Hebron'

Jerusalem—It all began three weeks ago when a group of Israeli women crossed an abyss of cultural differences and entered Hebron, hoping to come up with some joint peace action with Palestinian women. In warm and mutually respectful meetings, we decided on a plan for a grand march through the streets of Hebron in the Palestinian West Bank.

Some tension arose in our efforts to find slogans for the march that would be acceptable to us both. While our side vetoed "Jerusalem for Muslims Only," the Palestinians took us aback by vetoing all our slogans that implied legitimacy for the state of Israel—"Two States for Two Peoples," and so on. "We personally agree with this," they said, "but in Hebron we cannot carry such signs." It was disappointing to us that they could not defy that position, and perhaps even shared it. Nevertheless, we were all eager to find that narrow ledge of consensus in which we could cling to each other.

As the official negotiations between Israel and Palestine alternately advanced and floundered regarding the redeployment of Israeli troops in Hebron, and as Hebron's Jewish settlers stepped up their level of violence, we decided that a mass march could never take place in this volatile atmosphere. The Palestinian women had come to the same conclusion and we decided to postpone the event, but we were all reluctant to let this opportunity slip from our fingers.

"Let's hold a small march," suggested Amal, their chief decision-maker, and we all agreed at once. We set the date for Thursday (Oct. 31). Yes, a work day and a school day, but we were determined to make a least one modest statement before new political realities overwhelmed our enterprise.

Hebron is a town without pity—120,000 Palestinians and 400 Jewish settlers, the latter protected by a staggering number of Israeli soldiers. As if this firepower were not enough, both the Palestinians and the settlers in Hebron have stockpiled huge arsenals waiting for someone to light the match.

We knew it would not be easy to find women to enter the jaws of a population with such hatred in their hearts for Israelis. And we knew that marching together with Palestinians in full Muslim regalia would not win us points with the Israeli soldiers who have orders to break up any Palestinian demonstrations.

To make matters worse, in the days preceding our scheduled event the settlers in Hebron were involved in two shooting incidents against Palestinians. Following this, a phone call from a senior army officer warned peace groups not to even think about demonstrating in Hebron in the near future, as the settlers there have two

new squads—"one to shoot Palestinians and the other to shoot left-wingers who come to town." After long discussion, we decided to go through with the march: first, because one doesn't give in to bullies and intimidation; and second, because we have an important statement to make and we intended to make it.

Thursday morning came and thirty of us set off for Hebron with a mixture of trepidation and hopefulness. At the women's center in Hebron, we met our partners and were led by them to the rallying point. Amal gave the signal and we unfurled a huge 30-foot banner that proclaimed, purple lettering on white, our three agreed-upon slogans in Hebrew, Arabic and English: "Implement International Agreements," "Settlements Are an Obstacle to Peace," and "Yes to Peace! No to Occupation!"

We began to move down the street headed toward the center of Hebron, Palestinian women interlacing with Israeli women, pushing the banner in front of us like a skirt protecting this child of peace yearning to step out and be seen, but still afraid.

As we turned the corner into the main street, the whole city of Hebron seemed to wake up to our presence. We blocked cars in both directions, drivers pulled over to watch, storekeepers came out to see what all the fuss was about, market vendors put down their tomatoes and shook our hands, greeting "Shalom, Salaam, Peace" as we walked by.

A huge procession formed behind us, more women, children, shoppers, loiterers, the unemployed, the revolutionaries, the bored. A Palestinian woman put her arm around me and I put mine around the women on my other side, and we were all marching with our arms together, "yad be-yad" as we say in both Hebrew and Arabic, "hand in hand."

None of us had envisioned that it would be this powerful, this inspiring. We stopped waiting for the sound of an explosion, stopped looking for the disaster. Now we were feeling buoyed by the sense of common purpose, by the great longing in all our hearts for those very platitudes—no more bloodshed...a true and just peace. Thus we marched through the streets of that town of despair, feeling hopeful for a whole morning, hearing the sounds of a song that all of us were marching together, though we walked in silence.

I don't think we will ever let go of that moment, not those in Hebron nor those of us in Israel who experienced it. It was not a piece of paper signed between governments, but it was a vision of something that can really be, that can really happen, a vision of a reality that is more profound than paper.

—Gila Svirsky

Ebert divorces Marx from his humanism

by Laurie Cashdan

Teresa Ebert's denunciation of my review characterizing her recent book, *Ludic Feminism and After: Postmodernism, Desire, and Labor in Late Capitalism*, as "regressive materialism" only underscored the perils of attacking Marx's Humanism. (See Aug./Sept. and Oct. N&L). By reducing all questions of theory and revolution to one, the economic determinants of ideology, including gender, her letter reveals the serious consequences of such an error for feminists.

Notwithstanding her epithets attacking my review as "reactionary," "bourgeois," "idealist," and "revisionary," Ebert's anti-humanism, by sheering Marx's revolutionary dialectic from his economic categories, leaves workers—and women—theoretically imprisoned within

Woman as Reason

these categories. She accuses me of producing "a cultural Marx, placing 'human relations'—as if these are autonomous—as at the center of his work rather than the material and historical practices that structure those relations." Marx's own words in his 1845 *Theses on Feuerbach* defy Ebert's criticism: "The standpoint of the old materialism is 'civil' society; the standpoint of the new is 'human' society, or associated humanity."

However, we need to compare her analysis to Capital itself to see the results of divorcing Marx's humanism from economics. Ebert quotes from Marx's Preface to Capital his passage on individuals as "bearers" of class relations. His point is that Capital addresses capitalists not as evil individuals but "personifications of economic categories" (Capital, Vol. 1, p. 92). Ebert is right that Marx discusses individuals—whether capitalists or laborers—as representing objective economic categories. But are they only expressions of objective economic categories? Is the subjective swallowed up by the objective for Marx? Is Ebert suggesting, like Althusser, that Marx broke with his philosophic humanist writings of the 1840s; that there are two Marx's?

Beginning in Capital's first chapter, on the commodity form, Marx argues that capitalism dehumanizes humanity by turning relations between people into relations between things. Capitalist production creates what he calls "the fetishism" of the commodity. When the products of labor are produced as commodities, the worker's activity becomes so alien to him/herself that relations between human beings become reified—turned into things—erasing the human laborer's concrete activity.

As Raya Dunayevskaya argued long ago in *Marxism and Freedom* (1958; 1988), Marx's breakthrough was grasping the split between the laborer and his/her labor power. Where the capitalist views the laborer as labor power—a commodity—the worker rebels against this dehumanizing separation of mental and manual labor.

Ebert's economism and her hostility to humanism so drive her work that she perversely adopts Marx's critique of capitalism turning individuals into things, embodiments of economic categories, without seeing how he dialectically reveals its revolutionary opposite—the living laborers whose rebellion tears the fetishistic veil off the commodity by establishing "freely associated labor"—as they did in the 1871 Paris Commune.

Ebert cannot possibly grasp Marx's dialectical method of approaching opposites, objective and subjective, because she counterposes materialism to dialectics. She argues that I substitute "a philosophic method ('dialectics') for materialism. Ebert's 'historical materialism' ignores Marx's own profound relationship to dialectics—especially his appropriation of Hegel's "negation of the negation" as the revolutionary principle of history.

Dialectics reveals the possibility of transcendence immanent within a social totality. Ebert strips from Capital Marx's view of the human subjects that arise from within capitalism to destroy it. While her critique of ideology remains academic, Marx attacks "fetishism" through dialectics and subjective resistance.

To support her spurious claim that centering on human relations displaces historical materialism in favor of culture, Ebert argues that my attempting to "restore the individual as the center of social practices" is an "ideological" move. The view that an individual can only be

conceived through bourgeois Enlightenment ideology is consistent with French structuralist Louis Althusser's anti-humanism. Althusser argued that all subjects are interpellated (constituted) by ideology, through language, which constitutes individuals as seemingly autonomous individuals with ideas that inspire him/her to act.

Ebert insists that the revolutionary theoretician's responsibility is to expose the economic determinants of such ideology. She argues that "ludic" or poststructuralist feminists instead focus on the linguistic play of discourse. However, whether one approaches the "interpellation of subjects" from economic determinism or discursive determinism, either subsumes both dialectics and the revolutionary subjects arising from within capitalism.

How else could Ebert find the idea of women as revolutionary subject so despicable that she would conclude that our use of the logo "Woman as Reason" must mean women as "a spontaneous flow of emotions and sentiment," "helpless, uncritical creatures?" Women's struggles—as force and as "revolutionary Reason" throughout history—tear up the ruling ideology.

Ebert's one-dimensional view relies not on Marx's discussion of women and gender, but on Engels's *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*—indeed, Ebert conflates Marx and Engels. Engels links gender oppression to the onset of private property, arriving at the fantastic conclusion that women suffered what he called the "world historic defeat of the female sex." His conclusion, as Dunayevskaya argues in *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* (1985; 1996), could only have resulted from turning dialectics into mechanical positivism. Here we see the consequences of viewing women as "bearers of particular class relations and interests"—not as revolutionary subjects.

Grasping Marx's dialectical methodology allows us to trace this emergence of women as revolutionary subjects. Far from being reducible to "class struggle"—as Ebert claims all questions of revolution are—women's liberation in our era has insisted that revolution fully transform human relations, including the dehumanization of women. Unfortunately, Ebert casts off both women's liberation and dialectics of revolution.

NEW EXPANDED EDITION

Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution

by Raya Dunayevskaya

To order, see page 7.



Black Women United

Chicago—This year the Women's Studies Program at Loyola University started a group called Sisters which I was really excited about. It was supposed to be a support group for multicultural women, to bring us together and show our similarities as women. There are more women than men on campus, but the men still dominate everything. We felt we needed to do something.

But, when the first meeting came around, problems came out. I thought we needed to talk about why we were here and what we were for. We had some really different ideas, like, for example about the elections. Some women were Republican and some were Democrats. How can you organize a group with such different viewpoints? I can't go into something I don't agree with.

Plus, I didn't see any diversity in the group. This didn't seem to bother anyone too much. It's all white women, and I'm not about to preach the white woman's struggle when I've got my own. It was just like history class in school, where they won't teach you about your own history. So, I thought, Black women aren't coming to Sisters, and this isn't representing us. I thought we really needed our own group, and that's why I'm organizing Black Women United (BWU).

BWU is not a hierarchical organization and everybody's ideas matter. I don't want it to be any kind of clique. There are a lot of powerful Black women on campus, and I want us to come together. Sometimes Black women go to certain meetings, like the Black Cultural Center meetings, and our ideas are shot down. There's so much on campus that, as a Black woman, I can't identify with. So, this is about empowerment.

We hear names like Angela Davis, Elaine Brown, Coretta Scott King, but do we really agree with what they were doing? We need to learn more about these women. People say they come out of college confused. I don't want to be like that. We want to start a file on teachers, courses, scholarship, financial aid, etc., that can help Black women students. We want to deal with welfare and other political and economic issues that affect us.

There are a lot of African-American women leaders at our school who can do a lot. We're here for a cause—for Black women to unite—and that can be hard to do.

—Angela

Promise Keepers protested

Memphis, Tenn.—The daily newspaper, the *Commercial Appeal*, reported the Promise Keepers' meeting as men bringing commerce to Memphis as 52,000 filled the Liberty Bowl stadium, Oct. 11-13. Despite this welcome, they were met by Memphis WAC (Women's Action Coalition), News and Letters, and others, in a protest next to the Liberty Bowl. Our signs read, "Protect Your Family From the Christian Coalition," "End Male Dominance—Abolish the Promise Keepers" and "Stop Khomainsi-ism!"

We received thumbs up signals from drivers and several groups of Promise Keepers asked us why we were protesting. Two WAC women facing the exiting crowd on Friday evening had their pro-gay, lesbian, and women's rights signs ripped from their hands. They were yelled at and "prayed" over for hours by hundreds of hostile men.

The media ignored our protest and described the Promise Keepers' huge, all-male, charismatic prayer rally in glowing terms, focusing on its call for men to be more responsible to their families, to atone for their sins, and to practice "racial reconciliation."

They didn't report that these rallies are projects of the theocratic right, or that speakers insist that "family values" means dominating wives and fighting a "spiritual war" against homosexuality and women's right to abortion. They didn't analyze the fact that "racial reconciliation" means a few individuals forming friendships rather than fighting society's institutionalized racism. They didn't say that emotional mass rallies, promotion of male dominance, militarism, and opposition to homosexuality and abortion were tactics used by the Nazis to rise to power.

Men gather in football stadiums, chant Christian songs and listen to Jerry Falwell, Focus on the Family founder James Dobson, D. James Kennedy, Tim LaHaye, and Bill Bright—all prominent leaders of the theocratic right. New Promise Keepers then go home and submit their lives to the scrutiny of other Promise Keepers in a system borrowed from the "Word of God," an Armageddonist cult with which founder Bill McCartney has been involved.

The leaders of the religious right blatantly state that their mission is to destroy democracy and create a "Christian" fundamentalist government. The resistance they ran into in Memphis—the "buckle of the Bible belt"—is just a taste of what the Promise Keepers will get at their planned march on Washington, D.C., in 1997.

—WAC member

'Dangerous Intersections'

New York—A conference entitled "Dangerous Intersections: Feminist Perspectives on Population, Immigration and the Environment" held Oct. 25-26 drew together more than 100 students and environmental justice activists, almost all women. Professors spoke alongside Black, Latina, Native American and other community organizers and left wing environmentalists. Speakers discussed liberatory ideas as well as dangers posed by rightwing ideas and by racism within the women's and environmental movements themselves.

Betsy Hartmann, director of the Population and Development Program at Hampshire College and a founding member of the Committee on Women, Population and the Environment, explained the current revival of the Malthusian idea that overpopulation causes the world's problems. Malthusian arguments and eugenics blame social ills on poor people, people of color and women for having too many children, and on immigrants for coming to the U.S. These arguments of the right are gaining prevalence, even though birth rates are falling nearly everywhere in the world and women have fewer children as their standard of living rises. Problems of poverty and the environment are caused by the system we live under, she emphasized, not population pressures.

So strong is racist and anti-poor sentiment today that some liberal and women's groups have jumped on the "overpopulation" bandwagon even while they support reproductive rights, and many prominent environmental groups have joined the anti-immigrant hysteria. We see these ideas manifest today in widespread, sometimes forced use of unsafe chemical sterilization and birth control; mass incarceration of non-white men; and anti-immigrant laws. Some "leading analysts" have even blamed the violence in Haiti and Rwanda on population pressures!

Other speakers told stories of particular women's and community struggles. Several Native American activists discussed their cultures, relation of population and health issues to the land. They do not separate ongoing fights to save sacred sites, to stop uranium mining and nuclear plants—which cause high rates of cancer and birth defects—and to promote reproductive health.

Vernice Miller, an early "EJ" (environmental justice) activist in Harlem, said the EJ movement, while still battling many mainstream environmental groups, has advantages from being grassroots based. It is stepping up its international work, particularly regarding Mexico. Ludovic Blain of NYPIRG described community organizing among disparate immigrant populations in poor sections of New York City. A campaign conducted in four languages managed to defeat a proposed incinerator in Brooklyn.

Loretta Ross of the Center for Human Rights Education in Atlanta emphasized the need to work for what we are for—human rights, which are economic, social and cultural as well as civil and political. She urged us not to be only reactive, but to have our own plan and ideology, and to create a common movement for human rights.

—Anne Jaclard



Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Women in Colombia, according to the Instituto Maria Cano, have to prove they are not pregnant before they can get a job—even though required pregnancy tests are illegal! In Mexico, U.S. companies and their subcontractors—including General Motors—violate the law in the same way. Bosses argue this discrimination is necessary to avoid the expense of maternity leave. So far, Colombian women's groups have not had the resources to challenge the practice in court, but people are urged to call GM's Walter Ralph at 313/556-5000 and demand this practice stop in Mexico.

A woman worker was critically injured at Sri Lanka's Blanca Diamond Institute in the Free Trade Zone when her apron got tangled in the belt of a diamond cutting machine. Workers had repeatedly complained that their uniforms were unsafe, asking to change to trousers with head guards and footwear, but management ignored them.

—Information from Asian Women Workers Newsletter

New York City workfare means forced labor

New York—Some 70,000 New Yorkers are already in workfare, here called the Work Experience Program or WEP; the workers call it the Welfare Exploitation Program or just plain "slave labor." WEP does nothing to train or help recipients obtain "real" jobs, and it deprives them of all rights that workers have. The jobs are mostly cleaning streets, parks, subways and public buildings. Some non-profit groups are also obtaining WEP workers who will eventually be provided to private businesses.

The municipal unions have been complicit in accepting layoffs of union workers who are replaced by WEP workers. WEP workers receive the equivalent of minimum wage in food stamps and small cash grants.

Welfare recipients recently formed WEP Workers Together!, an organization "fighting to end WEP and for the creation of a real public jobs program and the development of workplace protections for workfare participants." One member, Sandra White, tells her story:

Although I am an actress, I worked in a bank for many years before being downsized out of a job. When my unemployment insurance ran out, I was forced to apply for welfare. You have to wait 45 days after you apply to get assistance. I was required to attend a two-week class on

how to get a job. When that didn't produce a job, I was forced into WEP. We have to report to a Sanitation garage in Brooklyn, from which my group is trucked out to clean the streets. We were supposed to get gloves and other protective gear, but so far we haven't gotten anything but orange vests, which are stored in the garbage cans overnight.

We are only supposed to sweep, but we are ordered to do other work, including picking up dead animals. Sometimes without goggles we use weed-whackers, which cause dog excrement and glass to fly up in your face.

We have to work outside in heavy rain storms with no rain gear and are not allowed to seek shelter. We have to ask the local businesses to use their bathrooms. If you bring your lunch, you have to carry it around all day by fastening it to your garbage can. One co-worker of mine was hit by a car and seriously injured; another was bitten by a dog and needed 72 stitches. Two workers in other groups have been killed on the job.

Our supervisors (Sanitation workers) harass us and treat us horribly. Sometimes we wait over an hour for the truck to pick us up after work. At the garage, the Sanitation workers have stolen our bikes and posted signs on the bathroom door saying "No WEP workers allowed."

Clinton created a monster when he signed the new welfare law. There may soon be 100,000 people on workfare in New York City. In WEP Workers Together! we try to help each other learn our rights and to change WEP altogether.



Ontario labor mass victory

Toronto—A great battle between the Tory government of Ontario and the left-wing extraparlimentary opposition was fought out peacefully in the streets of Toronto. Even the servile Tory press admits that opponents of the budget-chopping Mike Harris government achieved a resounding victory.

On Friday, Oct. 25, labour and its allies shut down this city of more than three million. Public transit was at a standstill; the volume of traffic on the city's normally clogged expressways resembled that of an early Sunday morning. Hundreds of businesses closed down or operated on a reduced basis. Protesters and police joked with one another and there were only one or two isolated violent incidents.

Oct. 26 will go down in history as the day of the largest demonstration in Canadian history. Three hundred thousand people marched on Queen's Park, the seat of the Ontario government. The mammoth crowd enjoyed the warmth and bright sun as speakers denounced the Harris Tories and discussed the prospects for a province-wide general strike. Bruce Coburn and other entertainers provided music and laughter for elated demonstrators.

In power for almost 18 months, the Tories seemed invulnerable only a few weeks ago. Now the tide has turned, and a huge drop in public support for Harris's neo-conservative agenda may force the government to back away from its harsh campaign of anti-labour legislation, budget cuts, hospital closures, layoffs and environmental deregulation.

—Labor ally

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

done. You work harder and faster because you can never do half a job. And this is when the system works. When it crashes, which is often, your job takes four times as long as it used to. The computer just locks you into a rigid mode of doing.

In the June 1996 N&L I wrote about how this technology is making all kinds of labor, from factory to secretary, more alike. The headline stressed the oppression is alike. But I wanted to bring out that the kind of questions that get raised are alike. When I talk with a good friend who is a secretary, the question of why we should do this kind of work comes up. This is the kind of question raised by workers against automation.

The machine oppresses, but it also forces one to leap beyond the here and now, to say, "This is not the way I want to live, not the way I want to be forced to think, I am not a machine." This is the dichotomy of capitalism. Capitalism has a rigid concept of what thinking is. Computers are analytical. Human beings can be analytical too, but can also make a leap in logic even under the system of capitalism. The human being by nature always finds a way around the machine, to "out-think" the machine.

The Information Superhighway will not save capitalism. As with all machines, you only get out of the computer the sum product you feed into it. Any information devoid of the human being thinking and living is totally irrelevant in the long term, it has no way to transcend this world.

MARXISM AND FREEDOM

from 1776 until today

BY RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

"The fundamental problem of true freedom... remains: What type of labor can end the division between 'thinkers' and 'doers'? This is the innermost core of Marxism... This basic question... arose out of the new stage of production called Automation."

To order, see page 7.

CAW sit-in seals GM pact

Toronto—The labour movement in Canada scored an important victory with the agreement last week between the Canadian Auto Workers and General Motors Canada that ended a three-week strike. The most contentious issue was outsourcing. GM wanted the right to contract with outside firms for items now produced in GM plants. The Canadian Auto Workers countered with the concept of "work ownership."

Work ownership does not refer to ownership and control of the firm but to the workers' right to keep the jobs they do, without threat of losing these jobs to outside suppliers. The principle of work ownership is now part of the contract between the CAW and GM Canada.

The Canadian settlement was watched very closely by Detroit because similar issues are at stake in the U.S. Some suggest that GM Canada's combative stance was a result of Detroit's fear that a win for the CAW might strengthen the hand of the UAW in the U.S. in its negotiations with GM. The CAW-GM settlement resembles an earlier agreement with Chrysler Canada and sets the stage for bargaining with Ford.

In the second week of the strike GM attempted to remove machinery from a parts plant in order to relocate production which prompted an unprecedented worker occupation of the plant. Workers ordered supervisors to leave, locked plant doors and chained the machinery. The crisis prompted GM head John Smith, Jr. to bypass the GM Canada president and fly to Toronto for face-to-face discussions with CAW leader "Buzz" Hargrove.

The occupying workers unchained the machinery and relinched the plant, but did not return the supervisors' lunches, which were commandeered during the seizure. Noting that over 40% of GM's global profits come from its Canadian operations, a GM Canada worker commented on the futility of GM's resistance to the CAW's "work ownership" proposals. "If GM was a person, they'd have him committed."

—Activist

Tough talks at Delta Pride

Indianola, Miss.—At Delta Pride Catfish plant, UFCW Local 1529 negotiations with the company are at a standstill. Our contract was up on Halloween. The company is using the same tactics that caused the workers to strike in 1990. They want to take back what we've already won—almost two years to get one week of vacation, and down-staffing job classifications.

The workers at the Delta Belzoni plant voted to eliminate a work week of four ten-hour days that the union let them try for six months. It's come back to haunt us—the company won't make any movement because they're trying to force us to accept that work week at all the plants. They haven't brought us a wage package or anything. The workers voted it out because it's highway robbery—eight hours a week that should be paid overtime. Not only that, they want to tie daily overtime to weekly attendance. So if I work Monday and Tuesday and get two hours of overtime but don't work on Wednesday, I'll lose the four hours of overtime.

The scuttlebutt is that what the Canadian consultants, who are directing Delta Pride management, have in mind for the future is how to run the operation with fewer people. Their example was that the same machine at Delta that runs 41 fish a minute with 10 trimmers behind it, in Canada runs 80 a minute with four trimmers.

We heard the union is asking for guaranteed work of 32 hours per week and changing the probation period from 60 days to 30. We also want to use our vacation the way we want, to split it up if we want, instead of having to use a whole week at a time.

We heard the union will try to get our pay to not depend on our job classification so much as on how long we've worked at the plant. You could have worked there several years and someone coming in on a different class makes almost as much.

One thing different is there are several rank-and-file workers who are part of the negotiating team. They got the feel of the attitude of the company—how they think you are nothing, how they don't consider anything you say—like we workers don't deserve anything. This way we can know better what's going on and cut down on the confusion.

—Workers ready to fight at Delta Pride

'It ain't over' in Detroit

Detroit—"The strike ain't over until WE say it's over—and we say: IT AIN'T OVER!" Six hundred supporters and striking Detroit News and Detroit Free Press workers cheered a fired Detroit News reporter at the most recent "Ox Roast" benefit put on by area local unions. These fund-raisers help striking workers' families (2,000 of 2,500 members of six newspaper unions have stayed out since July 13, 1995) and create a network of solidarity and struggle determined to win a decent contract and return all strikers to work.

The AFL-CIO calls this strike "the most important in America today." Its president, John Sweeney, was arrested in a Labor Day demonstration here. But both national and local leadership have quietly sidestepped all attempts to enlist their support for building mass rank-and-file actions like a National Labor March on Detroit.

Several newspaper bureaus were occupied one afternoon, throwing the Detroit News into such consternation that they shut down their mainframe computer at deadline time. On Oct. 11, 400 members of the National Black Caucus of Teamsters rallied for the strikers.

Newspaper workers supported Bridgestone-Firestone workers and Fox TV 2 Communications Workers, and have talked with striking Canadian Auto Workers. The six newspaper unions have resisted attempts to break them apart—the Typographers were urged by their own district president to "unconditionally surrender!"

One typographer said, "I have been in three strikes, but nothing as bitter as this. There were 900 printers at both papers in 1974; now we have 110. All the skill is gone from my job. Young people will never get the wages and benefits at this trade that we had."

The solidarity network is centered in the Action Coalition of Strikers and Supporters (ACOSS). For strike information or to leave a message call the ACOSS Hotline (810) 447-2716 anytime.

—Susan Van Gelder

Hood Furniture closing is anti-union racism

Jackson, Miss.—"Everyone who read News & Letters last issue knows how we finally got Hood Furniture to sign a contract with our union, IUE-Furniture Workers Local 282, on Sept. 20," said Lurlee Lewis, chief steward at the plant. "Well, on Oct. 11, they passed out a letter to all workers at Hood saying that the plant would close permanently no later than Dec. 15."

"They told us that the main reasons were poor quality of the furniture being made and excessive absenteeism. But we all know that the reason over 250 Black workers will lose their jobs is racism, pure and simple. Warren Hood always said that he would rather close the plant than let us be represented by Local 282 with Willie Rudd as president. They knew when they signed the contract that they were going to close."

"The truth is that we were telling management about poor quality production since last spring. We would put red tags on the bad furniture, but management took them off and sent the stuff out anyway. Warren Hood is such a racist that he could not live with a union contract signed by a militant Black union president. We never saw either Warren Hood or his son Jimmy in all the negotiating meetings. He couldn't see us face to face."

On Oct. 11, Hood had the company's C.E.O., Joe McMullin, send letters announcing the plant closing to Mis-

issippi Gov. Kirk Fordice, Jackson Mayor Kane Ditto, and IUE International President William Bywater. He said that Hood was open to selling the plant instead of closing it. The letter didn't mention the tax-exempt status Hood got when it took over the plant in 1983 or the hundreds of thousands of dollars in bond money from the City of Jackson and Hinds County.

"What we are doing now is filing unfair labor practice charges with the NLRB," Rudd said. "The contract was obviously negotiated in bad faith. They planned all along to close; they just wanted to avoid a strike or a boycott. We are calling on all our friends in civil rights organizations, labor and the community to put pressure on Mayor Ditto and Gov. Fordice, and demand that Hood not close the plant until a buyer is found. We are not ruling out any action."

Lurlee Lewis told N&L that "most of the employees are not crying; we're laughing. Over the past few years, Hood hired quite a few Black supervisors. They dogged us for Mr. Hood. The best part about this whole situation is that when management closes the door, they have to look for a job too. We stood up for what we believed in for seven years, and we stuck together too, even when it was rough. Wherever we go, if the plant closes, we will have that. They will have nothing."

—Michael Flug

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

Editor's note: This November marks the 40th anniversary of one of the greatest revolutions of the twentieth century, the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, which rose up against both "Communist" totalitarianism and existing capitalist relations. Since it is important not to lose the significance of this great revolt in the midst of today's ideological pollution, we publish here the following essay by Dunayevskaya excerpted from her pamphlet *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism, and the Afro-Asian Revolutions*, first printed by News and Letters in 1959 and re-issued with a new introduction in 1984. The full pamphlet can be ordered from N&L (See page 7).

Man does not live by bread alone; but he must have bread to live. The humane materialism of Marx holds both the immediate and long-term answers to the present colonial revolutions.

Present-day Communist attacks on humanism are neither accidental nor are they hair-splitting points of doctrine. They concern nothing less fundamental than whether these national revolutionary movements, as well as working class movements, shall emerge from the death-grip of state capitalism.

We need to be aware that Stalin chose to revise the Marxist theory of value right in the midst of World War II as the heroic Russian people were driving back the Nazi invaders. 1943 was chosen as the year for a seemingly pedantic article, "Some Questions of Teaching Political Economy," because that was the year the Russian production managers "discovered" the American assembly line technique. It was Stalin's way of telling the Russians not to expect a change in the conditions of labor after the war.

BECAUSE MARX'S THEORY of exploitation is built on his analysis of the law of value as the law of capitalist development, the Russian theoreticians, up until 1943, had denied the operation of that law in their country, an allegedly classless society. A revision of Marxism was necessary to make it possible, at one and the same time, to admit the law of value operating in Russia and still claim that it was "a socialist land." It took the form of asking teachers not to follow the structure of Marx's Capital.

As I wrote in my *Marxism and Freedom*: "Marxism is a theory of liberation or it is nothing. Whereas Marx was concerned with the freedom of humanity and the inevitable waste of human life which is the absolute general law of capitalist development, Russian communism rests upon the mainspring of capitalism—paying the worker the minimum and extracting from him the maximum. This they dub 'the Plan.' Marx called it the law of value and surplus value." (p. 24).

Just as the break of 1943 with the Marxist analysis of value meant the continued exploitation of the Russian workers, so the 1955-6 attack on the humanism of Marxism, in Hungary particularly, meant their continued imperialist control of Eastern Europe and their new intervention—by economic aid—in the colonial world.

Some there are who think that Russian Communist "aid" is different from that of American imperialism's Point Four programme. Others are so desperate to sell "Christian internationalism" to stop Communism that they claim that only one per cent of U.S. national income is needed to build up the underdeveloped countries. The truth is that neither Russian state capitalism nor the profits of the U.S. and "its wealthy allies" (including the wealth of the Krupp empire of West Germany) will ever rebuild the world economy.

THE WORLD ECONOMY must have totally new foundations operated by motive forces other than mere machine building and private or state profit. Only a qualitatively different kind of labour, one that comes from the release of the creative energies of the common people, can reconstruct the world on new human foundations....This, too, Marx foresaw long ago. In 1844 he wrote: "To have one basis for life and another for science is a priori a lie."

Marx foresaw the impasse of modern science not because he was a prophet but because he took the human being as the measure of all development, and therefore saw that at the root of all class divisions was the division between the mental and the manual, between science and life itself.

If there are any who still think that anything but an exploitative society could result from such a basic division, let them take a second look at both Russia and America and see where science has led them to. The duality that pervades capitalist society and invests each thing with its opposite, has led to automation, something which instead of fructifying man's labor simultaneously overworks him and throws him out of work. From the splitting of the atom came not the earth's greatest source of energy but its most destructive weapon.

The discerning scientist, for all his middle class identity, can see this now. It was Dr. William Pickering who stated that no matter who drops the bomb first "we are one-half hour's distance away from total annihilation." Since, continued Dr. Pickering, the scientists cannot help themselves, we must find an entirely different approach to life, "a new unifying principle from the heart and mind of man."

Such a unifying principle can be nothing but Marxist Humanism. It is the point of unity also between the masses in the underdeveloped countries and the common people in the advanced countries.

Hungary 1956: the light of freedom

It is just for this reason that Russia engages in the struggle against humanism. The undercurrent of revolt against the Russian tyrants is uncompromising and continuous. In the satellites it gives them no respite.

The revolt has been reflected even within the ranks of the Communists. Thus in 1955-6, Imre Nagy, who had been expelled from the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party, wrote a letter in which he assured the Central Committee that when the masses turn to humanism it is not because they "want a return to capitalism...They want a people's democracy where the working people are masters of the country and of their own fate, where human beings are respected and where social and political life is connected with the spirit of humanism."

IN THE PETOFI CIRCLE, the Hungarian Communist writer, Tibor Dery, declared on June 19th, 1956: "We have been fighting for so many things that we have for-



Hungarian freedom fighters felled Stalin's statues in the 1956 revolution.

gotten the chief thing—humanism." But the ruling bureaucracy would listen to none of this, especially since humanism was spelled out to mean "introducing self-management in the factories and workers' democracy."

As the whole world knows, the next stage in the humanist struggle was not theory but action—the Hungarian Revolution.

The ruthless totalitarian machine which crushed that revolution bore the not-so-smiling faces of Khrushchev and Bulganin recently returned from their junkets in Burma, India, Malaysia and their talks to people there about freedom from colonialism!

It was then that the Russian Communists bore down on all humanists. *Communist* (No. 5, 1957) gave out the line: Leninism "needs no sort of 'humanization' nor any of the reforms proposed by the proponents of 'humanist socialism.'" By then, the ruling Polish Communist bureaucracy had accepted "the line" and the attack was launched against all "revisionists." Jerzy Mirowski, Politburo member wrote on the eve of the Writers' Congress: "All revisionists describe themselves as creative Marxists. There is only one Marxism; the one that guides the Party."

This Party attack had to be that precise because it was from Poland that humanism had emerged and inspired the Hungarian Revolution. Though the Poles themselves stopped short of revolution, they made some attempt to take a stand on principle after the crisis in Hungary. Thus, *Nova Cultura* of April 28th, 1957, stated:

"The Communist ideal demands the liberation of humanity—and of the individual within the framework of society—from alienation in all the domains of society. The aim is to obtain the real sovereignty of the masses, to destroy the division between those who are deprived of freedom and the ruling group which is not responsible to the people. The idea of Communism, of humanism put into life, is universal."

By 1959 the iron curtain was shut tight and the Third Party Congress of the Polish Party directed a good deal of its resolution against "the revisionists, fencing with pseudo-left wing phraseology...(that) pushed many honest but ideologically weak comrades into the ranks of dogmatists who with the help of demagogical chatter presented themselves as allegedly the only authentic defenders of Marxism and Communism."

On the last day of the 21st Congress of the Russian Communist Party (February 6th, 1959) their chief, M.B. Mitin—who bears the august title of "Chairman of the Board of the All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge"—told us where to look if we were searching for true(!) humanism. "The magnificent and noble conception of Marx-Leninist socialist humanism" was in Khrushchev's Report! The rule "if you can't lick 'em, join 'em!" seemed to hold.² The hypocrisy was evident in the very next paragraph. Mitin hit out against all "revisionists" and especially against "Yugoslav revisionism."

"What is it if not apostasy, if not full retreat from Leninism, slanderously to claim as they do that the development of the Soviet State signifies 'a bureaucratic statist trend,' that the principle that the socialist state plays a decisive role in the building of socialism and communism is nothing but a 'pragmatic statist revision of Marxism.'"

1. Imre Nagy on Communism, "In Defense of the New Course," p. 49.

The reason this struck a raw nerve among the Russian Communists was not, however, due to theory, deviationist or otherwise, but because Tito knows the importance of the new Afro-Asian nations. He travels widely among the "neutral" countries and does so for the purpose of exposing Russia's role.

The question is—what does Tito propose in its stead? Whether state capitalism calls itself "Communist" or not, it has nothing more than private capitalism to sell. Both attempt to stop the new forces finding the path to immediate freedom.

2. This characterizes not only the Communists, but the Trotskyists too....The Communists have finally, after a delay of 32 years, brought out an English edition of Marx's *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* only to append to them some fantastic footnotes....Where Marx writes: "Communism as such is not the goal of human development—the form of human society," the Communists comment: "Under 'communism as such' Marx here means crude, equalitarian communism..." It is not Marx's alleged criticism of "equalitarian communism" that bothers today's Communists. What cuts to the quick is Marx's emphasising not the nationalization of property, but the freedom of the individual. Thus his prophetic warning against State Communism: "We should especially avoid re-establishing society as an abstraction opposed to the individual. The individual is the social entity."

Hungary '56 recalled

Editor's note: The following article was sent to us by an active witness to the events in 1956.

The 40th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution marks a watershed event in the history of socialism. In a prophetic manner, the revolution signaled the beginning of the end of the Stalinist system. The ruling elites of the capitalist Western world have presented the Hungarian Revolution as directed against socialism, when just the opposite was true. It was a revolt against the state-capitalism of the "Soviet Union" and its satellites.

The events of October 1956 were prepared over a period of several years and initiated by members of the Communist Party itself when, by the early fifties, it became obvious that something had gone terribly wrong with the Russian Revolution. Milovan Djilas theorized that a "New Class" had emerged, centered around the personality cult of Stalin, Tito, Rakosi, Dimitrov, Dej and the like. Hundreds of progressive members of the Party who dared to criticize the system were put in jail. Many, like Prime Minister Laszlo Rajk, were tortured and executed by the ruling clique surrounding these "demi-gods."

THE STRIVING FOR a human version of the socialist ideals got a tremendous boost when Imre Nagy became prime minister in 1953. In his short tenure before the Rakosi clique deposed him, he acted as yeast in fermenting an increasingly revolutionary intellectual zeal, concentrated primarily in the circle that took its name from Petofi, the great Hungarian poet at the time of the 1848 revolutions. More and more open criticism of the excesses of Rakosi were heard. Even satirical plays appeared. This ferment reached its climax in the open revolution that erupted on Oct. 23, 1956, when the main preoccupation of the crowds was to chase down members of the hated secret police, and "Revolutionary Workers' Committees" were formed in the factories.

Hundreds of books could be written just about the 11-day period between Oct. 23 and the day Russian tanks rolled in on Nov. 4. While Imre Nagy issued an unheeded call for help to the Western world, soldiers, civilians and even children fought the tanks with whatever they had, but they were no match for the superior forces of the Russian army. After a few days and tens of thousands of casualties, the fighting was over. If we add the 150,000 dissidents who left Hungary, it is safe to say that Hungary lost close to a quarter million people.

The fact that right-wing elements, including former fascists returning quickly from Austria and West Germany, joined the fight against the Russian troops that intervened cannot change the fact that the aim of the revolution was not an effort to turn Hungary back to a capitalist society, but to direct the efforts of building socialism to a new path.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN that today, despite this hatred of the Stalinist system, the Hungarian people look back to the "cradle to grave security" they had then as a veritable "Shangri-la"? Today the conditions for employment by the foreign and "new" local corporations include: no union affiliation, a minimum wage of 60¢ an hour, no unemployment insurance and no subsidies for the health care, food, housing, education and transportation that had once been free. More than 50% of the population has fallen below the poverty line, 10% is addicted to alcohol, the unemployment rate is 30-40%, and Hungary is now the "suicide capital of the world."

While in prison, Imre Nagy said that when the masses turn to "humanism" it is not because they "want a return to capitalism...They want a people's democracy where working people are masters of the country and of their own fate, where human beings are respected, and where social and political life is connected with the spirit of humanism." But it was the visionary act of Raya Dunayevskaya—based, at one and the same time, on her deep, philosophic studies of Hegel, Marx and Lenin, and on the actual revolutionary struggles of the 1950s—that established Marxist-Humanism as the philosophy of continuous revolution for our age. In that sense the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 remains a beacon in our search for a human future.*

—Laszlo Gati

* It is significant that Raya Dunayevskaya's Archives have been added to the University Library in Budapest this year.

PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE

Today, the battleground of ideas is rife with those reverting back to vulgar materialism versus those, especially cultural critics, trying to theorize their way out of the base/superstructure binary so dear to post-Marx Marxists. Cultural critics, in arguing their way out of culture as a reflection of an economic base, embroil themselves in the project of trying to transform consciousness through critiques of culture, or engage in the project of deconstructing the discursive realm where language does not communicate but deceives.

Cornel West calls this "prophetic criticism"; it seeks to demystify the representations of reality that construct our subjectivity and our consciousness. Here, superstructure not only reflects, but in a sense "creates"—that is, it determines our "subject positions" and our comprehension of reality.

By careful linguistic and/or mental maneuvers, many cultural critics attempt to theorize their way out of oppressive relations. But this method leaves no room for the notion of transcendence as immanent in the dialectic of our reality. Here, thought still does not escape the photocopy theory of knowledge because it is not credited with the ability to envision the new, a reality different from the one out of which it arose.

'CRITIQUE OF ALTHUSSER'

Raya Dunayevskaya's critique of Louis Althusser, published in the *October* & *Letters*, shows how difficult it is to break the dominance of the vulgar materialist view of reality, even today. Althusser is often credited with introducing a more complex view of superstructure and ideology in Marxism, but to Dunayevskaya his Marxism remained "vulgarly economist despite all its pretense to a non-economist approach."

For Althusser, ideology is not specific to capitalism, but the natural condition of humanity. It structures human consciousness in all modes of production, social included, and thus necessitates "theoretical labor" by intellectuals. This would mean that even in socialism and the struggle for it we need people (intellectuals, leaders, the Party, the State) to tell the masses the true meaning of reality because they are too saturated with "bourgeois reformist ideals."

As Althusser puts it in his essay "Theory, Theoretical Practice and Theoretical Formation: Ideology and Ideological Struggle":

Marx and Lenin put us on guard on this point, in showing us that the economic and political practice of the proletariat was, by itself, incapable of producing the science of society, and hence the science of the proletariat's own practice, but was capable only of producing utopian or reformist ideologies of society. Marxist-Leninist science, which serves the objective interests of the working class...was pro-

duced by the practice of intellectuals possessing a very high degree of culture (Marx, Engels, Lenin) and 'introduced from without' into proletarian practice, which it then modified and profoundly transformed.

Some argue that at least Althusser recognized the importance of theoretical labor, but really he did not. He merely recognized the labor of the vanguard party. To Althusser science, as distinct from ideology, is the product of intellectuals. What we have here is not philosophic mediation but rather a scientific mediator—and thought is still determined by the economic base, that is, capitalist production relations. Working class consciousness is contained by ideology, whereas intellectuals "with a high degree of culture" are able to demystify it.

Dunayevskaya answers Althusser by pointing out that the distinctive mark of Marxism is that "the worker was a thinking human being, a creative molder of history"—not just the bearer of social structures but the "bearer of the Idea of freedom." Althusser never got out of vulgar materialism because he never saw this—his anti-Hegelianism, anti-idealism, anti-humanism, manifests an intense vanguardism.

PHILOSOPHY AND ORGANIZATION

Today the popular reversion back to an explicitly vulgar understanding of materialism is a backlash against the excesses of the postmodernist focus on superstructure. This is seen, for example, in the new journal *Red-Orange* or even in John Torrence's new book *Karl Marx's Theory of Ideas* (1995), which tries to tackle the vulgar base/superstructure dichotomy and shows a sympathy for Hegelian Marxism—yet ultimately argues that the philosophic link between the early and late Marx was "realist and not idealist."

All of this is a manifestation of trying to hem in our new realities within the old duality of idealism and materialism which Marx's philosophy explicitly united as a "new Humanism." Althusser certainly makes clear the organizational ramification of separating idealism and materialism.



Inheritors of Althusser's vulgar materialism

Raya Dunayevskaya's work on the dialectics of philosophy and organization is an attempt to work out in ever more "richer and concrete" ways the realization of philosophy as a subjectivity of transcendence in order to realize the unity of reason and reality, theory and practice, materialism and idealism. Just as Marx turned to dialectic method and transformed it in 1844, Raya plunged into dialectic method as a means of reconstituting Marx's new Humanism as a viable alternative for today.

MARX AND TRANSCENDENCE

Her focus on philosophy as Subject, on realizing the self-activity of Mind, the Self-Thinking Idea through the unity of philosophy and organization may strike some as a serious discontinuity with Marx. After all, Marx's critique of Hegel was over the dehumanization of the dialectic. In response to Hegel, Marx inserted the real corporeal human being standing with his/her feet planted firmly on earth, into the dialectic and thus transformed transcendence within alienation into transcendence as objective movement. As Dunayevskaya put it in a 1986 document: "To Marx it wasn't consciousness in itself developing outside of the human being; it was the human being itself who develops consciousness, and with it, creating a world that man shapes himself, not out of whole cloth." But, the very next sentence reads, "Marx's indebtedness to the Hegelian dialectic manifested itself in the very next work, the 'Theses on Feuerbach.' There Marx credits not Feurbachian materialism but Hegelian idealism for having developed 'the active side in contradiction to materialism' of consciousness."

Even before 1844, in 1841, Marx had found himself in disagreement with Hegel; he saw in Hegel the failure to achieve the unity of reason and reality. But, Marx's answer to this diremption of thought and reality was not a turn to a vulgar concept of "reality" but rather to dialectic method which he put through a profound change. He singled out negation of the negation as the moving and creative principle of the dialectic of history itself. 1844 became his philosophic moment—the founding of a whole new way of thinking and being never before expressed in a systematic manner. What Dunayevskaya sought to work out throughout her life was how to strike a continuity with this new Humanism—how to "realize" it for new realities.

Dunayevskaya argued that working out the dialectics of philosophy and organization was the crucial determinant in realizing the unity of idealism and materialism, theory and practice, reason and reality for today. Only then can we truly displace the rule of vulgar materialism and post-Marx Marxism and create the ground on which the self-creativity of human history can unfold into what Marx called revolution-in-permanence. This remains an untrodden path in revolutionary history, but one that demands engagement by any interested in creating a truly new and human society.

—Maya Jhansi

New look at Louis Fraina (Lewis Corey) and American Marxism

Suddenly, in November 1918, a 26-year-old self-educated intellectual, the U.S.-born son of working class Italian immigrants in New York, emerged in the forefront of revolutionary politics in the U.S. His name was Louis Fraina, and he had been chosen by a group of mainly foreign-born socialists to write the lengthy introduction and editorial notes to *The Proletarian Revolution in Russia*, a 450-page book which made available for the first time in English many of the key writings of Lenin and Trotsky.*

In his introduction and commentary, Fraina not only hit out at the capitalist order and the imperialist war, but also declared boldly that "Bolshevism...is not a peculiar Russian product...it represents everywhere the revolutionary opposition equally to Capitalism and moderate, opportunistic Socialism." Fraina also pointed to the democratic soviets in Russia as "forms for the creation of a new type of government, which shall supersede the bourgeois political state."

These twin issues, 1) a break with the opportunism and compromise with imperialism and capitalism that had infected even Debsian socialism, and 2) an embrace of the new form of proletarian democracy, the soviets, were rallying points for thousands of American workers and intellectuals in the years immediately following 1917.

IMMIGRANTS, 'THE NEGRO QUESTION'

In her unpublished 1953 essay, "Our Organization," Raya Dunayevskaya noted that immigrants had brought

a new spirit to American socialism during this period.

Where Eugene Debs, although himself a Left and anti-war socialist, and certainly no opportunist, had nonetheless refused to break with the Second International after 1914, the immigrant socialists knew, Raya wrote, "that it was necessary to fight...the petty-bourgeois tendencies within the Marxist movement" (see *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, pp. 2042-2116).

Pushed by such ideas, the new American Communist Party concentrated its labor work not on the already unionized shops, but on the non-union sweatshops, part of, as Fraina noted repeatedly, the 80% of American workers who were not unionized. Young immigrant socialists, aware that Debs had not really attacked racism, wanted the Party to move closer to the Black masses.

Raya, herself an immigrant and a Young Communist during the 1920s, noted that the new line was that "the attitude to the Negro must be shown in life rather than in words" and "any member could, as a regular part of the agenda...bring up the guilty person on charges of white chauvinism...It was the first time the white members felt the Negro question instead of merely orating it." These revolutionary new beginnings were soon snuffed out, once Stalin took control of the international Communist movement in the late 1920s.

BUHLE ON FRAINA AND BOLSHEVISM

To many readers of *News & Letters*, the most exciting part of Paul Buhle's *A Dreamer's Paradise Lost: Louis C. Fraina/Lewis Corey (1892-1953) and the Decline of Radicalism in the U.S.* (Humanities Press, 1995), the first-ever detailed study of Fraina's life and work, will be the account of those revolutionary years, 1917-22.

Although Buhle brings this crucial period alive through a wealth of original sources, he is regretful of Fraina's move after 1917 to become "a full-fledged Bolshevik," going so far as to call this "his political doom" (p. 63), here seeming to side with 'Debsian' eclecticism. This is rather surprising considering that Buhle's major intellectual mentor is C.L.R. James who so frequently advocated an "American Bolshevik Party."

In 1918, at Fraina's suggestion, a number of young revolutionaries joined the Debsian Socialist Party in order to force a split between the revolutionaries and the reformists. In an appeal to these youth, Fraina wrote that "the struggle for democracy as such can be waged only as an integral part of our generation's revolutionary struggle for socialism" (cited by Buhle, p. 74).

In the spring of 1919, Fraina placed first in the balloting for the National Executive Committee of the new U.S. Communist Party, ahead of many older and better-

known figures. The years 1919-21 saw upsurges by both labor and the Black masses, but sadly, as Buhle points out, Fraina himself did not link them together and "failed to see the logic in this parallel" (p. 83).

In 1920, Fraina traveled to Russia for the Second Congress of the Comintern, where he made important contributions to the debate on trade unions. Although Buhle does not mention it, Fraina also spoke there on Latin America, which he called "the colonial base of U.S. imperialism," criticizing the U.S. Left which "paid no attention to the Latin American movement."

ENCOUNTER WITH LENIN, DIALECTICS

Drawing on Fraina's unpublished notes, Buhle offers a tantalizing account of his two meetings with Lenin: "In the first conversation, Lenin tried to convince Fraina of the need for American Communists to support a labor party in order to make contact with the masses; in the second, he spent hours stressing the importance of philosophy in the revolutionary movement" (p. 95).

There is no evidence in Fraina's subsequent writings that the second conversation on dialectics made any impression on him. By 1922, apparently because he was unable to accept Lenin's critique of ultra-leftism, Fraina resigned from his leading position in the Comintern.

Under the pen name Lewis Corey in the 1930s, he became one of America's best-known Marxist economists, but by now the radicalism of his youth had faded in favor of a more statist concept of socialism which brought him close to the politics of the Popular Front.

In the late 1930s, Corey, together with Sidney Hook, Meyer Schapiro and other intellectuals, founded *The Marxist Quarterly*, a journal open to various tendencies. It folded after only three issues, a victim of the necessarily deep divisions produced by Stalin's Moscow Frame-Up Trials. Corey waited all the way until the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939 to make a public break with Stalinism, and then, like so many intellectuals of the period, drifted to the Right.

Buhle's biography of Fraina/Corey offers us a unique window into an extremely important chapter in the history of American Marxism, one in which many intellectuals, despite their commitment to the Russian Revolution, to labor, and to Marxist economic theory, were ultimately unable to meet the new challenges posed by the rise of fascism and Stalinism.

—Kevin Anderson

Kevin Anderson is author of *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism*.

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NEWS

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POLITICS, ELECTIONS AND THE AMERICAN MIND

Everybody knows that political campaigns are giant propaganda mechanisms. They are all about mind stealing. They are working on the American mind. It isn't just at election time. They always do a lot of hiding the truth. How else could they keep trying to tell us that our lives are either already getting better as the Democrats do, or would get better with them as the Republicans do? In this system?

Mind intact
Chicago

* * *

I have been listening to the Democrats and Republicans promising the voting public how they are going to cut taxes for small business. What does this mean to the working people of this country? I'll tell you what it means for labor: Someone has to pay the taxes. Big business doesn't pay taxes; they are on welfare. Small business is getting tax cuts. Only the working class is left out. This is nothing new; the worker, the producer of everything, has gotten the shaft ever since the birth of capitalism.

Felix Martin
Whittier, Cal.

* * *

Asking Black people to vote today is like asking the Jews to have voted under Hitler's constitution in Germany.

Black man
Illinois

* * *

Dole is wrong to think people are stupid. They saw pretty soon where we were going with Gingrich's "Contract on America." It's real life, not rhetoric, that makes the impact. It was the beating of the migrant workers in Riverside, Cal. that got the Latino civil rights march in Washington going.

Journalist
Florida

* * *

Recently, when there was an outbreak of disease—causing E. coli bacteria in the water, the authorities tried to blame it on leaky diapers of babies wading at beaches. The truth is they weren't testing the water the way they should. So they blamed it on the public. That's politics.

Former water tester
Illinois

* * *

Ralph Reed's rhetoric in supposedly deploring the burning of Black churches in the South is all the more disgusting because it is the atmosphere of hate and division his Christian Right has been working so hard to build in this country that bears the responsibility for them.

Young educator
Illinois

* * *

The "real" story behind all the California propositions seldom gets known outside California. Take the two health initiatives—214 sponsored by SEIU and 216 by the California Nurses Association. The nurses started theirs first, but Sweeney wanted his own instead of just supporting the nurses. Now both may lose. The nurses in particular are concerned with patient care, but the way the proposition got written up, it reads as though they only want to protect their own jobs. It's a sad story.

Concerned voter
Berkeley, Cal.

* * *

I never voted in my country, Barbados, nor here. I see politicians are all the same: it is all about lying. They come around only at election time and promise you everything. Then you never see them again. They only take care of the rich. There is nothing for the poor man. My mother had a saying: "I don't build ground for the monkeys to play on."

Barbadian worker
New York

* * *

Politicians remind me of "snake oil" salesmen. They have the answers to whatever ails you.

Mark Jones
Chicago

* * *

I understand Lyndon Larouche was booed off the stage at Chavis and Farrakhan's National Political Convention in St. Louis. I don't understand why the people let Farrakhan speak up there. Larouche, Farrakhan and Perot are all in the same boat—they all need a dose of the kind of reality N&L writes about.

Retired Black steelworker
Memphis



heads of the disenfranchised and poor masses of voters.

Symphony conductor
Canada

ALTHUSSER AND EBERT VS. MARX

The October "Marxist-Humanist Archives" column said that Althusser was really attacking Marx's Hegelianism, because Hegel haunts the apologists for the State. We might add he haunts the apologists for the vanguard party, even if not now affiliated with a State, and haunts intellectuals who want to avoid the idea of revolution. Althusser's own party worked hard to thwart revolution in France in 1968. Whether it was the concept Althusser championed of an "epistemological break" between the young and "mature" Marx or his campaign (decisively refuted in Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism) to cover up the actual break in Lenin's thought stemming from Lenin's 1914-15 study of Hegel, the point is the same: to delete the Hegelian dialectic from Marxism.

Franklin Dmitryev
Memphis

* * *

Teresa Ebert, in her denunciation of Laurie Cashdan's critique of her recent book (October 1996), wrote: "Individuals, for Marx, always participate in all their relations inevitably as 'bearers (traeger) of particular class-relations and interests.'" She took this from the Preface to the first edition of Capital, vol. 1.

However, Marx wrote there specifically about his treatment of capitalists and landowners. He meant to analyze, not individual capitalists' greed or lack of morals, but the "laws of capitalist production." Ebert added to her out-of-context quote the words "always," "all" and "inevitably" in an attempt to reduce the complex relationship between forces for revolution to a single dimension.

B. Ann Lastelle
Chicago

* * *

Althusser's essay on "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus" is still considered by many Marxists to be an original "supplement" to Marx. What makes him attractive is his criticism of the illusion of freedom under bourgeois society and its institutions. Unfortunately, Althusser is not "supplementing" Marx, but closing the door to the comprehension of his original philosophy. Althusser treats the Hegelian Absolutes as if they were just another illusion to chain the revolutionary subject to capitalist ideology. But in rejecting Marx's humanist philosophy Althusser sacrifices the possibility of overcoming the illusion, thus condemning humanity to eternally live under its sway. Though Althusser no longer commands a great following, his legacy is still weighing heavily on the minds of many Marxists.

Cyrus Noveen
Los Angeles

* * *

I got a good laugh out of Teresa Ebert's conversion to "historical materialism." In the late eighties when Ebert was a professor making a name for herself as the "bearer" of post modernism at Northern Illinois University, I was in the Marxist-Humanist Forum, a group of undergraduates who held weekly study groups of Marx, Hegel and Dunayevskaya. We organized speaking events for a Black youth from L.A., a retired worker whose history goes back to building the CIA and a homeless youth who worked at the Delmonte plant. We also sold News & Letters at local plant gates.

Unfortunately Ebert's rejection of
Unfortunately Ebert's rejection of

If a picture is worth a thousand words, the enclosed front page of the New Yorker says a mouthful. If I had drawn it, I would have turned it into a "Dance Macabre" on the

Readers' Views

Marx as a "modernist" managed to disorient a number of radical students. Despite her current "profound" discovery that materialism is at the center of Marx's thought, I am skeptical when I hear her lecture others about being bourgeois.

Jim Guthrie
Chicago

U.S. FUNDAMENTALISM

Even if Louis Farrakhan's fundamentalism is removed from the "spirit" of the Million Man March, which is then linked to the Civil Rights Movement (as in Spike Lee's Get on the Bus), this view of Black history would still show severe limitations. It skims over the retrogression that has occurred from the high point of the Civil Rights Movement because its internal contradictions were not worked out.

Because retrogression is avoided, the lack of the historic-philosophic vision of a new society is compensated by the ideological conflict of visions. In the polluted moral atmosphere today, removing the pull of Farrakhan from the Million Man March fails to take up all that is at stake.

Steven
Los Angeles

* * *

When the Promise Keepers (PK) came to Memphis you could see how similar they are to Farrakhan's Million Man March. Both are steeped in fundamentalism, both carry on about "atonement," both tout the "sanctity of the family"—by which they mean the patriarchal family where women definitely are, or must become, subordinate. PK leader Bill McCartney, while a raving heterosexual, is no fool. Opportunistically he made the Memphis meeting a call for "racial conciliation." He knows most African Americans are not Muslims, but Christians. Since what they are saying is almost identical, I think McCartney is going to give Farrakhan a run for the reactionary money.

Feminist
Tennessee

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Oprah Winfrey had a show on date rape where there was a panel of survivors alongside Camille Paglia. (She's an anti-feminist intellectual who claims to be a feminist and has the simultaneous position that date rape doesn't happen and that if it does, it's the woman's fault for not being strong enough).

Woman after woman kept arguing that it's not about toughening women up to protect themselves (as if men are destined to remain pigs), it's about ending men's thought that they have ownership over women's bodies. And when Paglia kept using the phrase "white middle-class women," a Black woman from the audience got up to say that ALL women get raped and that behavior has nothing to do with it.

S.B.
Chicago

FOR BESSIE: CELEBRATING A REVOLUTIONARY LIFE

It was a shock to learn of the death of Bessie Gogol in August. It is easy to say Bessie was a women's liberationist before the movement came on the scene, because she was; and it is easy to say she was a freedom fighter before that term entered the world's consciousness, because she was this, too. Above all else, Bessie had a passion for making the American revolution and for Marxist-Humanism as the Idea that would get us there. Even at the last Convention she attended in 1994, when age was catching up with her, she attempted to make the youth understand the importance of having African-American youth as members. I'm sorry that her dream did not

come true in her lifetime, but when it does, her life and ideas will be recognized as an act of world history.

Angela Terrano
Prague

* * *

My special memory of Bessie is of the enthusiasm with which she greeted newcomers to Marxist-Humanism, including how she encouraged me to speak at my first Convention about the experiences which had brought me there. Unfortunately, it resulted in me giving a talk that ran well over time and having to ask for an extension.

Richard Bunting
Oxford, England



BOSNIA
HITS
HOME

One thing that brought my attention to Bosnia was "Schindler's List." After I saw that movie and all the things that were going on at that time, it hit home to me that this is still going on right now in Bosnia-Herzegovina when they talk about "ethnic cleansing." What is that but what the Nazis were doing back in that time? That's when I started wearing a Star of David. That was my way of saying: I see what happened then, and this is a constant reminder to me not to let those kinds of things go unchallenged. I refuse to close my eyes to that.

African-American student
Memphis

THE MIDDLE EAST IN CRISIS

Your grasp of the geography, the politics and the feelings on the ground shown in your lead on the Israel-Palestine events (October N&L) makes me wonder how you could be so well-informed from your distance. But the part that was the best for me to read was your assessment of the progress that had been made since the Oslo accords. Despite our criticism of these accords, there is no doubt they brought about a shift in the zeitgeist. I agree with your conclusion that the people are more eager for peace than are our leaders, and I was encouraged by the insight that "the Oslo accords have introduced a new reality which threatens to take matters far beyond the confines envisioned by the rulers."

Gila Svirsky
Jerusalem

I don't really understand the relationship between religion and the wars in the Middle East, but I thought it very important that Peter Wermuth related the struggle in Israel and Palestine to the Bosnian struggle for a multiethnic society. There is greater and greater racial polarization in this country. Racism is turning people into enemies who would otherwise be allies.

Women's liberationist
Berkeley, Cal.

With the recent outbreak of fighting in Jerusalem, it is time to talk about the taboo topic of religion. By this I do not mean the specific content of each religion, but religion itself as an attitude to the world. Ethnic strife, whether in Bosnia or in the Mideast, is not "caused" by religion, but finding a way out does demand a plunge into the seemingly labyrinthine question of religious alienation. When theory fails, that is where people return—to religion. It is part of the void in thought which allows for ethnocentrism and genocide and for all other sorts of counter-revolution.

It can no longer be left as a special, personal, category. Two or more contradictory ideas, the content of each religion, cannot lie side by side without conflict. These continuing crises just serve to underline the total inadequacy of religion to express or explain the human condition. The present crisis in Jerusalem is not really "about" religion, but about very worldly concerns, and this requires that we lift the mystical religious veil and make the leap from religionism to genuine humanism.

Malcolm
Bay Area

It's one thing to speak of the Palestinian people who have been driven off their lands as having a right to a homeland and a right to self-determination, as well as the state of Israel having a right to exist, but isn't it an abstract shibboleth to speak about the "national aspirations of Palestinians and Jews"? Whose "national aspirations" are being spoken of: Arafat's, Netanyahu's, Sharon's, Hamas', Islamic Fundamentalists', Orthodox Jews', Palestinian or Israeli workers', capitalists'?

I.R.
New York

The articles on the Middle East were impressive in giving a concise historic background which shows why everything is happening. You don't get that in the bourgeois press. Instead, you get only a picture of general chaos and random suffering.

Supporter
California

Every crusader who has occupied the Holy Land to "liberate" it—Roman, Ottoman, British Empire—has ended up on the garbage heap of history. Policies of racial superiority based on biblical "rights" cannot be upheld by military might and terror. Only accepting the mutual right of Israelis and Palestinians can possibly bring peace to the region.

Gyorgi
Vancouver



LABOR TODAY

World Trade Center security guards—members of SEIU Local 32B-32J—were locked out last March 1 by the Port Authority (PA) of New York and New Jersey. Most of us were here before, during and in the aftermath of the fateful terrorist bomb attack. We rose to the occasion, providing professional security.

This lockout is an attempt to bust our union and they justify it by saying it is due to saving money, downsizing. How can that be justified when they are spending \$26 million for art work and unnecessary helicopter jaunts for their executives? We were replaced by non-union workers at half the wages and no benefits or union. We went to arbitration and the PA was held in contempt; they did not even bother to show up.

The public and labor in general can support us by calling Gov. Pataki, (212) 417-2100; George Marlin, Exec. Director of the PA, (212) 435-7271. In unity there is strength.

Security guards
New York

I've worked at a lot of temporary agencies. One agency had me working for Federal Express, whose employees think it is a haven for good benefits and money. But the agency I worked for had their own little strict code. We couldn't be five minutes late more than twice or absent more than once in a 45-day period without being terminated. All for \$6 an hour with no sick days, no health benefits, really no benefits. They want you to get all your hours in. That way they get more money. These strict rules weren't imposed on the Federal Express employees. It was oppressive and there's no job security whatsoever.

Taken for granted
Tennessee

Ron Brokmeyer's essay (October N&L) suggests there is a "new stage of the socialization of labor" today. Is teamwork a new phenomenon that breeds revolt? Perhaps here and there, but on that basis can we claim we've reached a new

stage? Is there anything particularly revolutionary about a health care worker counterposing an "inclusive" idea of the team to management's idea that "excludes" both workers and decent health care? Brokmeyer says "the best of the principle of inclusiveness is overcoming racism, which is fundamental to the structure of American capitalism." I work every day and I can't see any organized effort on the part of American workers to end racism and rattle the very structure of capitalism. I don't mean that a worker's attitude to team concept is unimportant, but if it doesn't send the capitalist scurrying for cover, what is the point of singling it out as a new stage?

Mitch Weerth
Bay Area

Value does not come from computers or well-dressed bankers, but from what workers do with their hands. It's important for us to know how much value comes from us and how unfair it is that the people who work the hardest are the lowest paid.

Latina
New York City

NEWS & LETTERS

WHO READS N&L?

I am interested in learning more about your views and ideas. My participation in the Left goes back to the years 1980 and after in Iran. I was involved in the organization Peykar. I was also involved in the labor movement and helped organize many demonstrations. I was in prison for two years, and my serious interest in Marxist philosophy came out of discussions in prisons. Unfortunately, Farsi publications of Marxist philosophy are very few. Abroad, I have been able to study some works on Marxist philosophy. I'm looking forward to reading your publications.

Iranian activist
Australia

Ed. note: For Marxist-Humanist material in Farsi and other languages send for a free literature catalog.

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South Central CIA-crack connections

Los Angeles—Over the past month there has been a mass outpouring of protest from the Los Angeles Black community over the exposure in the press of how the CIA attempted to fund the Nicaraguan Contras in the 1980s. They were shipping in crack-cocaine for profit in order to buy guns for an illegal war in Nicaragua against the Sandinista government who the Reagan administration saw as a threat to democracy in the U.S.

At a meeting I attended, sponsored by the Malcolm X Grassroots Association, a Nicaraguan man spoke about the CIA's activities in Nicaragua as "a tragedy for my country and for yours. Oliver North and others raised millions of dollars to kill Nicaraguans and scar this country." The news has touched every family in the Black and Latino inner city of Los Angeles. It has become an exposed nerve that has been picked. It had been rumored on the streets for years that "We don't have boats or planes to transport this drug to South Central L.A. from South America, it must be an outside force, the white man." But now the facts have become clear.

The economic reality of South Central, Watts, and Compton is that unemployment is at about 50% or higher for Black youth. Industries like Goodyear, Firestone, GM left town 10-15 years ago. Smaller companies lay hidden behind tall gates with barbed wire and no windows. Many of these jobs, almost 95%, go to immigrant workers, the other 5% to white bosses, "the brains."

This conspiracy upon the inner city is not alone this highly addictive and cheap "high" (escape), but unemployment, exclusion from a job. The only money around is drug money to poison the one who buys it, as well as the seller who sells to a friend, a neighbor, their homie. The feeding frenzy of poverty is a capitalist conspiracy.

There is the inevitable prison time that follows for those who smell it or sell it. California has a big boom economy for new prisons. In the 1980s there were about ten penitentiaries in California, but today there are around 30. Sentencing ratios, when it comes down to crack versus powder cocaine, are about 100 to 1. The difference in convictions and sentences is like night and day, Black and white, when it comes to who uses it and who goes to prison.

A speaker for the Malcom X Grassroots Association stated that "we have to be willing to fight internal and external enemies within the community. But there is something wrong here when the state puts all of its money into the police department to fight drugs, and not into drug treatment. Although 70% of the cocaine use is in the white community, 80% of the war on crime is

fought in the Black community. There is something very wrong here. We need to fight the human rights struggle. We need the right to be treated as human beings."

—Gene Ford

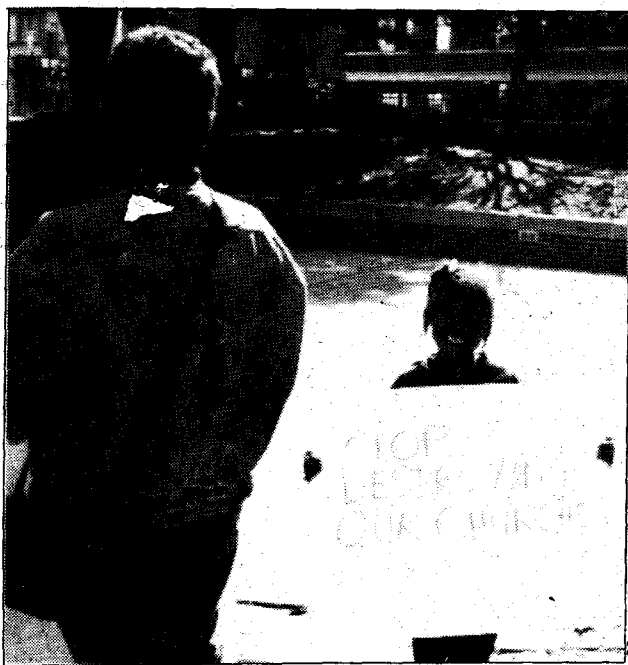
Los Angeles—There have been several very large demonstrations since the information about the CIA-crack connection became public. Several of these demonstrations had well over 3,000 in attendance. All the Black politicians are jumping on the bandwagon and all the white politicians are saying it "couldn't be true, the CIA wouldn't do that!!!"

At one rally held at King-Drew Medical Center, sponsored by the Brother Crusade, all the Black politicians were in attendance. The most powerful speaker was a young Black man named Mark Morrison from Inglewood (a Black community in Los Angeles); he was the last speaker and they tried to rush him off but he wouldn't be silenced. He spoke about his life in a Black ghetto, of how the police always harassed Black men. He spoke of a friend of his who was stopped, handcuffed, taken to jail and thrown in a cell; all of this without probable cause and while he was experiencing a sickle cell attack which almost killed him.

Mark felt that the drugs which were brought into his community were being used and sold because the young men and women felt there was no way out of their life in the ghetto. No jobs were available and no matter where they went, the police followed them. He felt he had to tell us about this so we would know the truth and help to change things.

—Judy Tristan

March assails burnings



Young demonstrator was one of many at Chattanooga, Tenn., march on Nov. 2 against the wave of church burnings in the South as well the torching of two homes owned by Black activists engaged in struggles against discrimination in the Chattanooga bus company and the school board.

Legal lynching in Miss.

A Madison County, Miss. district attorney named John Kitchens is seeking the judicial lynching of Azikiwe Kambule, a 17-year-old South African native. Azi was born in the former apartheid Black township of Soweto. Two years ago he moved with his parents to Jackson, Miss., after his mother won a scholarship to Jackson State University.

All through Azi's stay in America he did well in his classes, even though like many children in Soweto, he missed numerous days of instruction on account of school boycotts in protest of apartheid.

According to police reports, Azi was riding in a car driven by Santonio Berry on Jan. 25, 1996. While cruising around Hinds County, Berry spotted a car being driven by Pam McGill, 31. Berry followed McGill until she pulled into her apartment building's parking lot and forced her into the passenger seat of her vehicle. He then ordered Azi to get in the back seat.

Berry drove into neighboring Madison County. He took McGill deep into the woods and fired two shots into her body. Azi was arrested one week later. Even though he was little more than a bystander in the crime, and has no criminal record, prosecutors are seeking the death penalty.

Azi receiving a fair trial in this racially biased community is unlikely. The prosecutor bragged to a local paper how he was a force behind getting the trial moved from predominantly Black Hinds County to increase the chances of getting a death sentence.

Stephen Hawkins, executive director of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, stated: "It is terribly ironic that a child like Azi Kambule could survive some of the most turbulent years of apartheid, only then to face the death penalty in Mississippi."

The capitalist system with its corruption, incompetence, discrimination and poverty is about to commit a horrendous crime of premeditated vengeance against a human being—"all in the name of justice." Those who want to help save Azi are asked to send letters of protest and tax-deductible donations to ensure he gets proper legal representation: NCADP/Save Azi Now!, 918 F. Street N.W., Ste 601, Washington, DC 20004. —D.A. Sheldon

Black/Red View

Clinton and Dole's 'dirty little secret'

by John Alan

On the first day of October, during the final month of the presidential election campaign, the bipartisan "Welfare Reform Bill" went into effect. Both Clinton and Dole gushed that "welfare reform" happened because of their joint political efforts. But they did not dwell on the fact that their "welfare reform" has nothing to do with helping welfare recipients out of poverty, but instead was the implementation of a political maneuver to cut the welfare rolls by introducing new punitive bureaucratic controls over the lives of welfare recipients.

For the first time states have broad powers in determining who is eligible for welfare and under what conditions they can get it. In other words, welfare stipends will cease to be a response to human needs, but will be doled out according to the political ambitions of local politicians and the prevailing morals and racist attitudes of local communities. For example: a welfare department in Florida is proposing that welfare recipients must pass a urine drug test to qualify for welfare. In California Governor Wilson, who built a now-waning political career on his opposition to educating children of illegal immigrants in public schools, immediately took advantage of the new welfare law to deny welfare support for prenatal medical care for poor immigrant mothers.

REGULATING THE POOR, ATTACKING LABOR

The Clinton/Dole "welfare reform" opens a door for the states to compete for larger block grants of welfare money if they can sharply reduce their welfare caseloads. Thus, many states have opted to cut the new federal five-year limit on welfare to two or three years. In Arizona, no adult can receive welfare for more than 24 months in a five year period. Florida has a welfare limit of no more than 24 months in any 60-month period.

Other states have cooked up a host of gimmicks to reduce welfare caseloads, from shipping welfare recipients to jobs outside of their state to paying businesses to train welfare recipients, to offering tax credits to employers if they hire welfare recipients.

If many of these state plans are implemented, they will mean nothing less than a reduction of welfare caseloads without making the slightest change in the existing high level of poverty in this country, especially among African Americans living in the inner cities.

Of course, the use of these kinds of draconian methods to statistically reduce the welfare rolls punishes the poor in the same spirit that 19th century capitalism once did, when it drove the poor to "workhouses" to work hard to support their poverty-ridden lives.

"Welfare reform" is not only trying to impose upon welfare recipients a form of compulsory labor, it also attempts to introduce welfare-controlled labor into a trade union. This happened last September during the contract negotiations between New York City's Transit Authority and the Transit Worker's Union. The Transit Authority persuaded the union's president, Willie James, to give up 500 union cleaning jobs to welfare recipients. When the Transit Authority insisted that the minimum wage welfare recipients couldn't be union members, opposition in the union stalled the idea.

This attempt to reduce union wage jobs to minimum wage jobs in New York City reveals that so-called "welfare reform" is an attack upon the standard of living of the entire American working class.

STINGING LASH OF 'MORALITY'

Tom Wicker, former New York Times columnist, wrote in his book *The Tragic Failure* that "the white backlash of the last several years and issues such as affirmative action, poverty, crime, unemployment and welfare have made race the subtext for almost all political debates — the 'dirty little secret' of American politics."

Wicker stated a historic truth about the nature of American politics. It is indeed dirty, but its racism is hardly a secret. For example, Reaganism gained political ascendancy by pushing back the gains of the Civil Rights Movement under the "moral/racist" banner of exposing Black welfare mothers allegedly getting enough money from welfare to own Cadillacs.

In 1993, President Bill Clinton, unlike Reagan, went directly to the Blacks in Memphis and told them how amoral their community was. He stood in the same church where Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his last sermon in support of the sanitation workers, and talked about unwed Black mothers on welfare, violent Black crimes in the streets and the widespread use of drugs. All these social evils, according to Clinton, stood in the way of economic recovery and he urged African Americans to be more moral than the white community.

Clinton's 1993 speech in Memphis was directed not just at his Black audience, but to the white middle class. He wanted that class to know that he was a "New Democrat," who could separate himself from the political interests of poor African Americans.

There is no question that the Clinton/Dole "welfare reform" will make the lives of the poor more miserable. It will not end poverty in America. Most certainly, new political struggles will emerge to beat back the drastic cuts in welfare. However, what is on the historic agenda is not a restoration of welfare but the creation of a new kind of society in which the social production of goods for human needs does not automatically create poverty.

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

submit voluntarily to the servitude of God by becoming the slave of another person, thereby learning obedience and humility, which are becoming of a slave. Reciprocity (*al-mu'awadah*) here rules that if a free person refuses to become the slave of God, he may be subjugated and made the slave of a slave of God, in fair and just retribution." That was written by Ustadh Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, a liberal Sudanese Islamic scholar.

What the Qur'an does not forbid it permits. It accepts, but supposedly regulates, slavery. "It...recognizes concubinage...urges, without actually commanding, kindness to the slave...and recommends, without requiring, his liberation by purchase or manumission."⁴

What this means in the context of Sudan is that the current slave trade is justified on religious and moral grounds. (See the August-September News & Letters for my article on slavery in the Sudan.) There is no contradiction between beliefs and actions for the Muslim *murahaleen* who capture and enslave Dinka. Nor is there a moral dilemma for Muslim traders who buy and sell their "lost" pagan brethren. Nor is there any justifiable reason for the Islamic fundamentalist rulers to emancipate the enslaved.

Muslims believe further that the Qur'an is the literal word of God delivered by God's last messenger on earth, the Prophet Mohammed. A true Muslim and a true Muslim society must regulate all aspects of public and private life in accordance with the principles of Islam. This includes the mosque and the state. Therefore, Muslims are bound by the word of God to carry out the Qur'an and the Sunnah (the interpretation of Islamic laws known as Shari'a).

Shari'a has been advocated by the fundamentalist NIF, and both the ruling Umma and DUP parties. Under Shari'a, the Southern population, which is primarily Christian and animist, would have few rights. "Shari'a classifies people in terms of their religious beliefs and apports civil and political rights accordingly."⁵ Muslims would have the full rights of citizenship. Christians and Jews, *Ahl al-Kitab*, People of the Book, may or may not be offered a compact called *dhimma* in which they could enjoy security of person and property. But they would have to pay a special tax called *jiziah*. They would also suffer certain civil disqualifications. An animist, considered an unbeliever, would have no rights whatsoever. This strips most southerners of citizenship rights.

Shari'a thus creates a pyramid-like social structure akin to a form of religious apartheid. At the top are Muslims, then Christians. At the bottom are animists, considered non-believers. Islamic fundamentalism is the ideology that has created this edifice under which the southern Sudanese suffer.

—Robert Reed

4. Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 7.
5. *The Second Message of Islam*, p. 22.

Rage of the poor promise shaky second term for Clinton

(Continued from page 1)

country wound up with Clinton remaining as president and a Congress in a slightly reduced Republican majority amounts to Gingrichism with a better face.

WHERE IS THE OUTRAGE?

The low turnout was not a question of apathy which Dole in particular railed against the week before the election. The very day he demanded to know "where is the outrage?" the Black youth of St. Petersburg, Fla. showed the world exactly where and how volatile the outrage is when they exploded after white police officers killed still another Black teenager. It was the sixth police shooting this year in St. Petersburg and came just one week after another shooting in the same area. It took three days to quell the rebellion.

Florida is not the only place where youth were serving notice they will no longer tolerate the rampant police brutality that pervades this land, North and South, East and West, in small towns and large cities alike. In the same week as the Florida eruption, there was not only a demonstration against police brutality in Chicago, but also in the small town of Leland, Miss. After a crowd of 450 people marched to the police station to demand answers to the shooting of a Black man, the mayor declared a curfew, and 30 officers of the Highway Patrol were called to line Main Street before the crowd was assured that the U.S. Dept. of Justice would look into the case. (See page 11 for stories also from Los Angeles, New York, and Joliet, Illinois).

It was in St. Petersburg, moreover, that one of the signs carried by the youth made a global connection in demanding: "Stop the genocide!"

During the entire campaign neither Dole nor Clinton even pretended to address the outrage of the Black community that simmers so close to the surface. That is, neither addressed it, except to attempt to contain it by 1) vying to be the strongest proponent for "law and order," and 2) criminalizing an entire generation of Black youth. But just as coldly, neither so much as uttered a single syllable about the impending human disaster in Central Africa.

Four nations, Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, face a situation of such unimaginable proportions that relief organizations have been warning it will dwarf the Goma death toll of two years ago.

On the eve of the election, Barnett Rubin, of the Council of Foreign Relations in New York put it bluntly, "You just aren't going to get the U.S. President focusing on this at this moment."

That does not mean Clinton can be expected to focus on it after the election. The truth is that the West has been indifferent to Africa ever since the Cold War ended, an indifference to genocide extended by the U.S. responses to the slaughter in Bosnia.

The complete disregard of an impending disaster in Africa showed the extent to which both candidates were determined to maintain total silence during the campaign on any matter concerning foreign relations, about which they thought very much alike. The silence will not, however, make the multitude of international crises lying in wait go away, any more than Clinton telling us that we are all better off than we were "four years ago" can cover up the grim economic reality in the U.S. today.

That grim reality is the relentless "downsizing" spelled out in continuing layoffs and wage cuts for the American people. The very week before the election, revised figures released by the Labor Department showed that, far from declining, the number of people who lost their jobs had increased in the middle of the decade.

According to the Council on International and Public Affairs, if the jobless rate were adjusted for part-time workers and those who want to work but have given up on looking, the number of jobless in the U.S. would be 14.6 million and the jobless rate would be 11.4% (more than twice the official unemployment rate of 5.6%).

Most significantly, the rate would be 2% higher still if it included the vast American prison population which

reached 1.6 million last year as more and more of our unemployed youth, especially Black and Latino, are being warehoused in the new prisons this country has been building at unprecedented rates.

CHRISTIAN COALITION IN WAIT

Far from the American people basking in a "feel good era," the economic anxiety that pervades the land is palpable. It translated into votes for Clinton only because the American workers saw over the last two years how far back to pre-union, Depression-era conditions Dole and Gingrich's agenda intended to take them. Yet never has it been more evident that no candidate was seen as offering a way out of the morass of political, economic, and social crises confronting us.

Precisely because of this situation the ultra reactionary Christian Right has found its chance to grow and has become a serious threat to the freedom forces struggling against the retrogression that Reaganism set in motion in the 1980s, when it vowed to shape America well into the 21st century. That is what we are now seeing come to pass. So alarming is the speed with which the Right has been moving that in the past two years that a "Christian Left" has raised its voice to fight them, organizing itself as the Interfaith Alliance.

New immigrant militancy



Washington, D.C.—The first ever national demonstration of Latinos drew 50,000 people from all over the country here Oct. 12, to celebrate being Latino and to protest poverty and discrimination in the U.S.

Put on without the support of large organizations, the Latino and Immigrants' Rights March brought together Chicanos whose families have lived here for centuries, Puerto Ricans whose families have lived here for decades, political refugees from the Central American revolutions, and recent economic refugees from Mexico and every country in South America and the Caribbean.

Held on Columbus Day—known to Latinos as the Day of the Beginning of the Invasion of America—the mood of the march was indignant. "Basta Ya!" (Enough!) was the cry, enough of scapegoating immigrants for all the problems here, enough of "Gingrich balancing the budget on the backs of our children."

Plans for the march began two years ago with the protests in California over anti-immigrant Proposition 187, and the need to protest became urgent with the recent rash of state and federal anti-immigrant laws that followed. The marchers shouted, "We're not immigrants, we're indigenous" (to this continent), and "We are here and we're not leaving!"

Signs proclaimed, "If we were good enough to build this country, we are good enough to get equal rights," and "We paid for our rights with our sweat and blood." About the "English only" laws, people pointed out, "There are parts of the U.S. where Spanish has been spoken for hundreds of years. Look at the names: El Paso, San Antonio, California, Colorado."

There were banners and demonstrators with ski masks in support of the Zapatistas in Mexico, and newspapers about that continuing struggle. Many people wore their national dress or waved flags and banners.

The demands of the march included: amnesty for undocumented immigrants, a minimum wage of seven dollars an hour, support for affirmative action, a halt to police brutality, free public education for all through college, and expansion of health services. The march was largely a grass-roots effort. Many groups did not endorse it, or did so only at the last minute.

Yet contradictions were evident on the rally stage. La Raza, which called for a stronger border patrol, was invited to speak before it even endorsed the march. Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice president of the AFL-CIO, and the Democratic Party politicians present, tried to channel the new consciousness and indignation into electoral politics, specifically, support for Clinton.

On top of that, the many union delegations present were plastered with Clinton-Gore signs—this, while Clinton has been signing the most repressive anti-immigrant legislation in years! There seemed to be a real schizophrenia between the leaders, whose rhetoric ended in a whimper of support for Clinton, and the mass of the marchers, many of them workers and youth who had spent days on buses to get there, and who were demanding something now.

A new generation of U.S. youth, who came in solidarity from all over the country and a small presence of African Americans Caribbean Americans, Asians and Irish—these were the many signs of possible new beginnings in pan-Latino and pan-immigrant solidarity, activity and thought.

—N&L Committees participants

What is frightening is the extent to which the Christian Right has moved far beyond the "poor-white" Bible Belt stereotype associated with conservative, religious movements in the past. Ralph Reed's Christian Coalition, with Pat Robertson as its figurehead, has more than tripled in the last few years to 1.7 million members who include lawyers, doctors and business executives and who communicate by e-mail and fax machines.

They have been increasingly influencing local elections from school boards to governorships. They kept a lower profile in the Republican Party this year because they are looking ahead to take over the Republican Party via the "grassroots" for the next election. Generally careful to present himself as "responsible" and "reasonable" (a pose the media has helped him maintain), Reed recently let the cat out of the bag in one interview when he suddenly and angrily declared, "We no longer will be the lapdogs for the Republican Party."

He is counting on drumming up the most reactionary tendencies in the country. It is why the most important election returns to watch this year were not the presidential one but the local ones, including no less than 93 initiatives in 20 state, and the decisions on who would control the House and the Senate. There the serious contradictions the freedom forces are confronting in this country are glaringly evident.

THE BATTLE AHEAD

The fate of California Proposition 209 to overturn affirmative action is among the most significant. Its passage cannot be blamed only on the enormous amount of money poured into the campaign by its proponents, or on the Orwellian language they used, daring to call it a "Civil Rights" initiative "against discrimination."

That so many African-American, and Latino voters rejected it, and yet it won, means that the white vote for its passage was enormous. That does not mean that there were not a large number of young white faces seen at the anti-209 demonstrations, or that white women as well as Black were not among the most active in the fight against it. It does show how deep the racial divides remain not only in California, but in this entire land.

The retrogressive tide today can also be measured by the fact that the number of Black members in the U.S. House of Representatives, which had been ever so slowly increasing up to 1994, has gone down with this election. It was clearly thanks to the reapportionment engineered by the Republicans last year and upheld by the Supreme Court. More such realignments are in store next year.

It makes it all the more important to recognize that, despite what might look like a solid South for Dole, he had some very close fights in many of those states where there was both a high Black turnout and where he did not do well with poor white voters who have also felt the brunt of all the cutbacks.

In California the proposition to increase the minimum wage passed. In Colorado the religious right was tried to slip a misleading "parental rights" bill into the state constitution, and planned to introduce it into 20 other states next year if it passed. It fortunately failed.

It is well to remember that the very pattern of "States' Rights" which Gingrich resurrected has, ever since the Civil War, been designed to give the power to the Right, free from any constraints on its racism and class interests. It took the Civil Rights Movement to turn that around. Now that we are on the way back to the old status quo it seems clear that only a movement can overturn that tide again. That seems to have been the response to the passage of 209 in California; demonstrations broke out at a number of campuses where speakers reminded students that "if slavery had been up to a vote, it wouldn't have been defeated."

It is therefore worth asking whether the all-time record low turnout to choose a president for the four years that will take us into the 21st century is part of the recognition of something important? Do people want a very different way out of the political, social and economic crises confronting the world at such a crucial point?

In the face of the intractable economic crisis today there have been the first faint signs of new stirrings by labor. Yet the plans of the AFL-CIO leadership last spring to devote a sizeable fund to organizing the unorganized was quickly shifted to re-electing Clinton. No less than \$35 million was targeted on winning 40 seats in Congress. That the effort succeeded in electing only 6 of the 40 means that \$6 million was spent on each seat won. Still, the greatest achievement of the Union Summer campaign was that the young people, primarily students, sent to do the organizing learned that only workers themselves can do that from below. The most important kind of such worker self-organizing has been going on especially in the South over the past few years, and has been reflected in the workers' own reports in the pages of News & Letters.

The appearance of "teach-ins" on labor such as the recent one at Columbia University, where hundreds of students poured out to hear professors, labor leaders and feminists speak about class questions as being at the center of American concerns today, is another small sign of the search for a way to unite theory and practice to find a way out of a retrogression that seems intractable (see page 11).

In face of the enormity of the problem and the ever-further move to the right which these elections have just confirmed, all the signs of a social movement of any dimensions struggling to emerge may appear feeble. It is what makes so important a paper like N&L where all the voices are heard unseparated from a philosophy of revolution that can help them find a direction. Working out that kind of unity can determine a very different future for us as we move toward the 21st century.

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Editorial

New Edge of revolt in Indonesia and East Timor

Indonesia's President Suharto undertook a fleeting visit to occupied East Timor on Oct. 15 to review firsthand the state of affairs in what his government calls Indonesia's 27th province. Perhaps it was a face-saving move motivated by the recent awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to two high-profile activists for the self-determination of the East Timorese people, Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo and Jose Ramos Horta. Suharto was nonetheless unable to conceal the reality of genocidal brutality Indonesia has enforced since its invasion in 1975. Army troops lined the streets of Dili, the capital, to ensure that there was no display of opposition by the East Timorese people.

The tension that underlay Suharto's visit is one he is no doubt familiar with; as his own country is rife with hostility towards him and the ruling class which has enriched itself under the authoritarian regime he has led since he seized power in the wake of the coup of 1965. This tension has global importance, for Indonesia is a giant country with a crucial position in the vital Pacific Rim economy. In the past five years alone foreign companies have invested \$13 billion in Indonesia, much of it in the form of maquiladora-like subcontractor factories in which workers toil in appalling conditions for as little as \$2 a day.

BROAD OPPOSITION

Indonesia's social tension exploded in July as the government carried out a plan to remove Megawati Sukarnoputri, daughter of Sukarno, deposed in Suharto's rise to power, from the leadership of the Indonesian Democratic Party, a legal opposition party. Official control of Jakarta was lost for days as opponents of the government battled the army from behind barricades.

Arrests not dissimilar to the massive roundups of 1965 followed the summer unrest as the government moved against members of what it calls "formless organizations." Those arrested include Budiman Sujatmiko of the illegal Democratic People's Party (PRD) and Mughtar Pakpahan, the leader of the Indonesian Welfare Workers' Union, a man already familiar with the insides of Suharto's jails.

Independent labor activity is perhaps at the top of the list of the Indonesian state-capitalists' nightmares. A worker uprising in the Sumatran city of Medan in April 1994 shook up the rulers, already worried by a large foreign debt. The fear that transnational corporations like Nike and Levi Strauss will seek out countries with a more quiescent labor force weighs heavily on their minds.

The conditions in the factories of companies like Nike

have sparked resistance on the part of the workers who have left their farms and villages to seek work in production. Pakpahan's union, which operates outside the confines of the official trade union structure, has grown to half a million members despite the clandestine organizing methods it must resort to. This resistance, despite official claims, has no continuity with the huge Communist Party of the 1960s.

— the PRD's Sujatmiko is 27 years old. Today's workers are young and increasingly female. They are confronted with ruthless exploitation and are responding with their own creative power.

EAST TIMOR

In East Timor too, resistance exhibits both continuity and discontinuity. Indonesia succeeded in eliminating most of the armed struggle against the occupation, but as Jose Ramos Horta stated in a visit to Chicago earlier this year, "The resistance followed the people out of the mountains" and has assumed new, mass forms in the towns."

The importance of Indonesia had an impact on a U.S. presidential campaign in which international affairs played almost no other role. But the money funneled into the Clinton campaign by some Indonesian capitalists is only a small sign of the American relationship with that country. The invasion of East Timor was carried out with the approval of Washington and with U.S. arms. The cold reality that continues to the present is that Indonesia is seen as both a valuable market and a



Jose Ramos Horta

'Bisexual Politics'

Bisexual Politics: Theories, Queries, & Visions edited by Naomi Tucker with Liz Highleyman and Rebecca Kaplan. (Haworth Press, Binghamton, N.Y. 1995).

Until I read this anthology of articles from some of the most active bisexual theorists/activists of the past quarter-century, I did not know that a Bisexual Movement has been developing since the pre-Stonewall days of the 60s "Sexual Revolution."

I also was not aware that Bisexual Liberation has mostly been spearheaded and carried out by feminists and that "Bisexual Politics" often begins from a radical feminist perspective, calling for an end to patriarchy and all sexual divisions. Just as much of the history of gay and lesbian struggle has been overlooked because of the heterosexism in society, so too the Bisexual Movement's achievements have been largely overlooked by the Gay/Lesbian Movement because bisexual politics were rejected by them.

Many of the authors write about their painful experiences coming out as bisexuals after believing themselves to be lesbian, only to be rejected by lesbian and gay friends who accused them of "betrayal" or "sitting on the fence," between the two opposing "binary" worlds of gay/straight. These women who had struggled for lesbian inclusion and visibility in the early Gay Liberation Movement now found themselves fighting the same battle again for bisexuals. Their decades-long struggle with both queer allies as well as the heterosexist outside world has resulted in a unique political perspective fascinatingly documented and debated by the 37 authors (31 of whom are women).

Though this historic perspective makes clear why a strong identity politic has arisen among bisexuals defending the legitimacy of their fluid sexuality, what is most interesting and challenging about this collection are the essays by those who wish to go beyond identity politics to an "idea politics...based on a radical, choice-based, consensual, sex-positive, diversity valuing ideology rather than any specific characteristic-based identity." (Highleyman)

Many authors have developed theories to challenge monosexism,¹ genderism² and "capitalist patriarchy" within the context of a broad-based "Human Liberation Movement." Looking beyond debates over inclusion within the gay and lesbian movements, feminist bisexual radicals are working to develop a transformative vision for humanity which challenges all oppressive societal divisions. This collection is a must-read for radicals of all sexualities who are serious about developing revolutionary pathways to new human relationships.

—Julia Jones

political bulwark against the unruly Chinese giant.

The future of Suharto's order is uncertain. He will face no real opposition in next year's elections, as Magawati will not appear on the ballot. His government is increasingly harried by worker revolt and the struggle for self-determination by the peoples of East Timor and Irian Jaya. World capital is hoping for an eventual smooth transition into a less blatantly coercive form of government in Indonesia. But the dreams of the financiers may go unrealized. The masses of Indonesia, Irian Jaya and East Timor may succeed in taking matters into their own hands.

A statement in the underground East Timorese youth publication Neon Metin may foreshadow the future: "The end of the conflict in East Timor will generate the destruction of Indonesia itself." Every country is really two worlds — the rulers' world and the workers' world. The destruction of the world of the Indonesian rulers may well be drawing near.

Ogoni fight continues

Berkeley, Cal.—At a meeting commemorating the anniversary of the Nov. 10, 1995 hanging of Ken Saro Wiwa by the Nigerian military government, regarded to be at the urging of the Shell Oil Company, Dr. Owens Wiwa, the brother of Ken Saro Wiwa, told the story of the movement against Shell's destruction of Ogoniland and Ogoni peoples.

Dr. Owens Wiwa mentioned that at the beginning of Shell's exploration in Nigeria, the Ogoni were looking forward to the prospect of jobs, better hospitals and schools that the income from oil would bring them. But Shell did not hire Ogoni workers. They brought in all-white construction crews. They never negotiated with the Ogoni for their land; they just took it.

Without any warning, the construction company bulldozed over cultivated fields literally a few days before they were to be harvested. The women, whose fields were bulldozed, came to ask the construction company "why?" The Nigerian soldiers fired at the unarmed women. This was the first of the "ethnic clashes" in which thousands of Ogoni died.

Shell poisoned what they didn't bulldoze, since they never cleaned up any of their spills, caused many flare-offs and in general caused the living conditions to drastically deteriorate. In 1989, Ken Saro Wiwa, a journalist, wrote papers documenting the effects of Shell's destruction of the land and its effect on the people. A collection of his papers, called the Ogoni Bill of Rights, was signed by every Ogoni intellectual. Shell's response to the organization among the Ogoni was a campaign of misinformation and hostility ending in the trial and hanging of the nine Ogoni leaders. Referring to the recent Headquarters demonstrations, Dr. Wiwa asked what can the Ogoni do to be considered as important as the trees are to the environmental movement? He asked the people of the U.S. to help stop Shell. Shell wants to be invited back by the Ogoni because new oil reserves were found under their land. They are pressuring the chiefs to sign such an invitation. If they do, the Ogoni people will lay down on the roads and the military will roll over them.

Dr. Wiwa spoke about the remarkable change in the way of thinking among the Ogoni. After 3 years of organizing, they no longer bowed to the inevitability of corruption. They regained their sense of human dignity.

When I mentioned that a similar story — of looking forward to "development" only to be disappointed by it and finding a new way of thinking in overcoming the "plantation mentality" — is told by Black women organizing in the South, Dr. Wiwa immediately saw the universality of the process. He mentioned that the strongest labor union in Nigeria is one of Ogoni women.

Since appeals to all governments and all international bodies has not resulted in any help for the Ogoni, Dr. Wiwa is turning to people fighting for their dignity everywhere to forge solidarity.

—Urszula Wislanka

Kurdistan betrayed

In the Oct. 17, 1996 issue of the *New York Review of Books* Iraqi author Kanan Makiya writes about the shock of hearing that Massoud Barzani, the head of the Kurdish Democratic Party, invited Saddam Hussein's army inside the U.N.-protected enclave in the north, and tries to account for his own failure to see it coming ("The Politics of Betrayal," pp. 8-12).

Saddam's forces promptly moved to capture as many members of the Iraqi opposition as they could get their hands on, including Arab intellectuals and defecting soldiers. In some places people fought back; many died, were executed, or taken away to a horrible end. Makiya writes: "A five-year experiment in autonomy and self-rule has thus come tumbling down. A historic opportunity has been wasted."

His sense of betrayal is all the more pronounced because in 1991 he has proposed Barzani to head the Iraqi opposition: "Iraqis could not do better than have someone like this preside over the reconstruction of a post-Saddam Iraq." How could he be so wrong?

Makiya's is one of the finest voices to emerge in the last decade challenging the violence of the Ba'athist regime and the complicity of many Arab intellectuals. His *Republic of Fear* (1990) was published at a time when the U.S. was still embracing Saddam as an ally in maintaining regional stability. Makiya showed how all-pervasive is the Iraq state's strategy of instilling fear in the Iraqi population, not only by brute force but also in its language and its architecture.

His second book, *Cruelty and Silence* (1993), written after the Gulf War, documents the cruelty of, the "Anfal" campaign of genocide which killed 300,000 people. It also describes the deafening silence in the writings of Arab intellectuals about these issues.

In joining the Iraqi National Congress, Makiya tried to promote a democratic political process "in which their would be room for Shiites and Kurds and radicals and technocrats," because in his words, "I was sick of the sloganeering and empty Arab nationalist rhetoric."

In the NYRB article Makiya is very articulate in pinpointing Barzani's "inability to see the larger interests of Iraqi Kurds outside the parochial concerns of his own tribal and family alliances." Makiya states that he failed to see that Barzani "had accepted the 'Arabness' of the state of Iraq accepted, that is, that there was no alternative to an exclusionist, dictatorial, Arab nationalism."

That notion, I am afraid, pre-empted the Iraqi and Kurdish masses from being heard and from fully participating in the process of conception, formation, gestation, and labor of giving birth to a new human society.

The question that remains unanswered in Makiya's self-examination is his own notion of what would constitute a "commitment to a whole that is larger than the sum of its parts, a commitment, in other words, to a convincing idea of Iraq."

—Cyrus Noveen

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Youth

Manuel Salazar is innocent!

Editor's note: As we go to press, a Will County jury decision has effectively freed Manuel Salazar. He was wrongly convicted of killing a cop in 1985. He was enduring the final days of a new trial after his previous conviction was overturned by the Illinois Supreme Court due to enormous support for him in the Latino community. Below we print the story of one of his long-time supporters.

Joliet, Ill.—In 1984 I came home from work and saw a bunch of squad cars going up the hill to the Black community. I knew it was big because I'd never seen so many police cars before. The cops were going crazy, knocking on every door, stopping people in cars. My wife was stopped and asked to give information on where Manuel Salazar was. She heard on the police radio: "He's armed and dangerous, kill him on sight." Manuel fled to Mexico.

Before the policeman died he had brutally beaten Manuel with his fists and his gun. Manuel was 17 years old, weighed 145 pounds and was skinny. The police officer was over 200 pounds.

We have to ask why the officer stopped the car to begin with. Us Black and Latinos have one thing in common—we look suspicious. It was Blacks and Latinos in the car together—that's why they were stopped.

He was brought back illegally to this country, kidnapped and taken to trial with an all white jury in an all white community in Bloomington, Ill. in 1985. His attorney at that time was under investigation for bribery in California and then was convicted. Everything was against Manuel.

The Latino community back then did not get involved. There was no organization, no activists, so therefore nobody did anything for him. But now there's a lot of support for him internationally. Now they can't ignore his call for self-defense.

When I got involved the police started harassing my family. We had a hard time finding a space in a church to hold a meeting for Manuel.

Why did this have to happen? It always happens in a Latino or Black community—never in a white community. It only happens to us.

Me and my wife and children have been attending the trial since it started—every day. There are three Black people on the jury. One Latino woman was on the jury but she dropped out. The prosecution fought to have no Latinos on the jury. The attorney for Manuel fought to have the trial in Chicago, but the judge fought to keep it in an all-white community.

Manuel faces death in Joliet. I fear he can get no justice when the system wants to kill him.

—Latino against death penalty and police brutality

L.A. marchers: End police brutality!

Los Angeles—About 300 mostly young Black and Latino activists marched through the streets of L.A. and then gathered at a rally in front of police headquarters to protest police brutality, Oct. 22. The speakers includ-

Columbia teach-in brings new friends to Big Labor

New York—Billed as "The Fight for America's Future: A Teach-In with the Labor Movement," organized labor conferred with Left academia before an overflow audience of well over a thousand students and activists at Columbia University, Oct. 3-4. The conference was an historic expose of the failures of the union movement in recent times and the dire conditions of immigrants, the unemployed, Blacks and women today. Similar conferences are planned around the country.

If there was a new beginning made by the conference, it was due to the presence of so many youth, some of whom had taken part in "union summer." The students were urged to help organize unions, teach labor history, study the economy, expose the sweatshops, and pressure universities to spend money for these things.

The plenary sessions featured the new leaders of the AFL-CIO, who, pushed by their membership, the majority now made up of minorities and women, tried to address contemporary problems. President John Sweeney even referred twice to lesbian and gay rights. Union officials were joined by social democrats such as Cornel West, feminists such as Katha Politt and Betty Friedan, and prominent labor historians and sociologists.

CAPITALISM WITHOUT EXPLOITATION?

Everyone decried "corporate greed," unemployment and low wages, yet no one named capitalism as the enemy, or proposed changes beyond making this system more fair through "radical democracy." The union people spoke of reviving some mythical "social compact" between capital and labor.

Some advocated limiting immigration for fear it brings down wages, including Orlando Patterson, a Black immigrant Harvard professor. He warned that the unions must face their complicity in not organizing the low-wage "informal economy" of Blacks, women and immigrants. The formal sector is now being incorporated into the informal, instead of vice versa. There was sharp debate on whether to fight for rights for documented immigrants. Most speakers assumed it was "indefensible" to demand rights for the undocumented.

The lower level leadership of the "new" AFL-CIO talked a good talk. Executive Vice President Linda Cha-

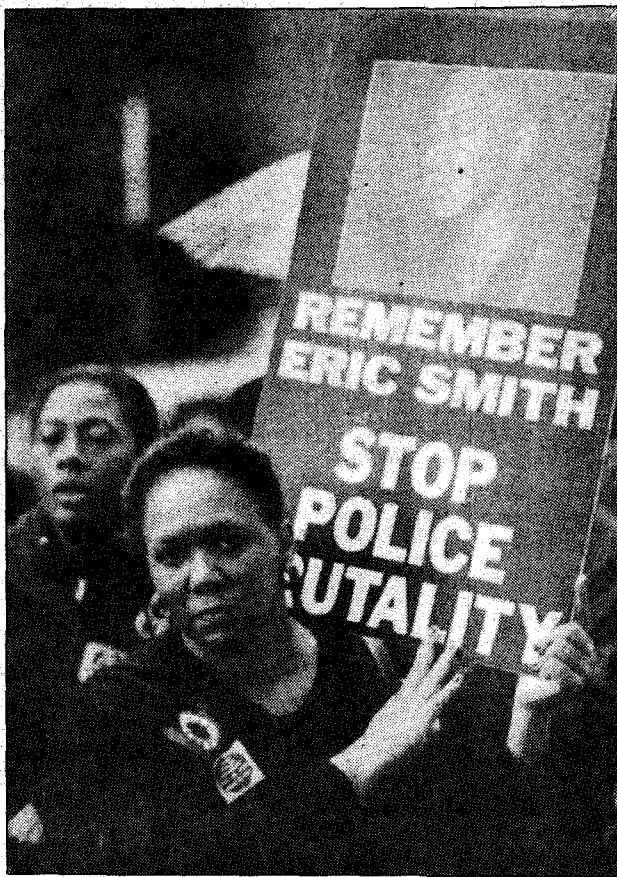
ed friends and family members of victims of police killings.

Richard Beitty spoke about how his nephew's death in a police shooting led to the formation of the Coalition for Victims of Police Abuse. "Now, every time I hear of a police shooting I pay attention," he declared. "because they lie—they lie in your face." Sebastian Ramirez said his friend was shot 13 times by the police. "We want them to get charged as murderers," he demanded, "to go to jail and to stay in jail."

Molly Bell, an activist from Compton, spoke about the CIA-crack connection: "My community is dying and the police let it [crack] in. We are all victims of police brutality. We have to stand up or we'll all be part of a police state. In our courts today people are getting 25-year sentences for possession of crack. We want jobs, not more jails. We took the chains off our legs. We are not going to let them put them on our minds. We'll shut L.A. down like in '92."

—Cyrus Noveen

Oct. 22 National protests



Rally and march Oct. 22 against 5,000 incidents of police brutality a year in Chicago, including the police killings of unarmed and deaf Eric Smith in April, homeless window-washer Joseph Gould last year, and 24-year-old Bilal Ashraf. Similar protests took place throughout the country in a growing movement of outrage against the U.S. in-justice system.

vez-Thompson reported that workers no longer believe that education and hard work guarantee jobs. Whereas most people believe the government taxes and spends too much, she said, 48 percent also think that government does too much to help the corporations.

Karen Nussbaum, head of the AFL-CIO Women's Department, cited the gender gap in politics and organizing. The workforce is now about half women. Since 1985, more women than men have organized into unions. With five and a half million women members, the AFL-CIO is the largest women's organization.

To loud cheers Jose La Luz of AFSCME, called for "changing the culture of the institution called union" by changing the relation between leaders and members, and for "transforming reality rather than accommodating to it." In contrast Richard Trumka, AFL-CIO Vice President, declared that labor is winning battles and we should support Clinton; when booed by the audience, he asked if we were for Dole.

STRATEGIC ORGANIZING

Bill Fletcher, AFL-CIO Director of Education, said the unions are faced with a choice: to fight against welfare repeal and organize "workfare" workers, or to ignore them and cut the best possible deal to restrict their replacing paid workers.

He put forth his own radical solution, that the unions resist welfare repeal and states' rights; confront the growth of forced labor, including prison labor; and change the union movement's outlook about who we are, so as to organize workfare and unemployed people. He also reminded us that stigmatization of the poor is only possible because of racism.

However, when he was confronted by members of the New Directions Caucus of the Transport Workers Union, which was trying to defeat a proposed union contract that allows lay-offs and replacement of subway workers by workfare workers, Fletcher declined to "get involved in a local dispute."

It remains to be seen whether the conference marked merely a new period of academia and the union movement using each other, or a period of new labor struggles.

—John Marcotte and Anne Jaclard

NYPD murderer walks scot-free

New York—In December 1994, Anthony Baez, a 29-year-old Puerto Rican man, was playing football with his brothers in front of their home in the Bronx. The ball hit police officer Francis Livoti's patrol car. Livoti became enraged and murdered Anthony Baez by placing him in that infamous illegal choke hold responsible for the police murders of a number of Latinos and African Americans over the years.

It took two years for the Baez family and community pressure to force the district attorney to indict Livoti—a cop with 11 previous complaints of violence against him. Charged with criminally negligent homicide, Livoti chose a trial before a judge. Cops can avoid trial before a jury of the communities they terrorize.

The defense at the trial was ludicrous. The judge called police testimony "a nest of perjury." A Latina police woman broke the "Blue Wall" of silence and testified against Livoti's version of the events. She now fears for her life. The cops had testified about a "mysterious pair of Black hands" that appeared out of nowhere to choke Baez! This is not a joke! Willie Horton's hands somehow appeared, disembodied!

By Friday, Oct. 4, it was clear Judge Sheindlin would have to convict. On Monday, Oct. 7, the judge said Livoti was not innocent, excoriated him—and then pronounced him NOT GUILTY. All hell broke loose in the courtroom. The anguish of the Baez family and the community was almost unbearable to witness.

Anger and outrage poured out of the courtroom in a spontaneous demonstration and march. Police responded with more brutality, confident they can do anything they want. They shut down the courthouse and swept the sidewalks in military formation with riot sticks and assault-type weapons, helicopters flying overhead.

As a caller to a radio station said, "If we cannot get a conviction in this (Livoti) case, what does it take to get a conviction of a cop who kills a person of color? It becomes a pure color line. And it's their courthouse. There is no justice."

—John Marcotte

Students fight for AIDS education

Chicago—Students for Peace and Justice at Oak Park-River Forest do lots of things: We work with Jobs for Justice on the Nike campaign fighting against sweatshop labor and now we're working on the AIDS curriculum and AIDS awareness week.

Last year the School Council treated AIDS Awareness Week like an event, handing out red ribbons. But that doesn't do anything. Our ultimate goal is to get a clinic in the school where you can get birth control and information about AIDS and pregnancy. We'd like a social worker who you can go to if you can't go to your parents, but are afraid you're pregnant or HIV positive.

We made up a survey to find out what kinds of protection people used, how often they used it and what Health class taught them. All that was being "taught" about AIDS and sexuality was that you should practice abstinence. One of the questions on the survey was "Are you sexually active?" But the principal made us rephrase it to say "Do you practice abstinence?" because the school policy on sex is "abstinence."

We can teach the student body rather than waiting for the administration to do anything. We got two speakers but had to give the administration their names and their phone numbers so they could tell them what they could and couldn't say and do. We told them the speakers would show the students how to use a condom using a banana to demonstrate and that they'd pass out condoms. The administration said no and said that they had to say that abstinence was the best way and couldn't pass out any information unless it was pre-approved.

The posters and pamphlets we ordered were good ones that teens would listen to. But the administration wouldn't approve them unless they said abstinence is the only way. One pamphlet said something like "Are you unsure whether or not you want to have sex?" "Are you unsure about being gay or bi." We were told "That would make the student body uncomfortable." I don't think it would. High school students want to figure out who they are. I think it makes the administration uncomfortable! The principal could not even say the word "condom" or "sex" in the meeting we had with him. He kept dancing around the words.

—Two white high school feminists

Mario Savio

As we go to press, we have heard the sad news of the sudden death of Mario Savio, leader of the Berkeley Free Speech Movement of 1964-65, with whom we carried out an active dialogue over the years (see especially his contribution to the pamphlet, *The Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution*, published by News & Letters in 1965).

A vigorous and committed political activist and humanist, Mario Savio had redoubled his political efforts recently, throwing himself into activity against California's racist Proposition 209 ballot initiative which calls for the abolition of affirmative action. Our next issue will contain a fuller discussion of his life and legacy. The struggle continues!

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

As autumn began, the labor battles of 1995 and 1996 were renewed in a number of countries in Western Europe, especially Germany. There, over 100,000 workers went on strike on Oct. 24, after some employers in the steel and auto industries reneged on a pledge three weeks earlier on cuts in sick pay and other social benefits.

In a previous series of strikes, on Oct. 1, workers from Mercedes Benz, General Motors, and Ford shut down assembly lines for a day to protest management plans to violate current union contracts by taking advantage of a new law allowing them to lower sick pay from 100% to 80% of regular pay. At least 63,000 workers from Mercedes alone participated in the strike, prompting a stunned management to change its tune, immediately promising to keep rates at 100%.

One union official stated at an Oct. 1 rally, to thundering applause, "We will defend what our fathers and mothers fought for in a long strike," while a rank and filer argued very concretely that cutting sick pay would "force sick workers to drag themselves into work. That we will never accept" (*Die Tageszeitung*, Oct. 2, 1996). Workers were well aware that, as another union leader put it, "the question of sick pay is the Trojan horse of the employers, who want to restructure the entire system of social benefits" (*Le Monde*, Oct. 11, 1996).

Many more serious battles lie ahead, with employers sure to demand take-backs in next year's contracts, and with the conservative Kohl government moving ever further to cut social benefits as well as regulations and taxes on capital, all in the name of making Germany more "competitive."

In France, a large public sector workers strike against

Middle East talks break down

A month after Clinton's "photo-op" Oct. 1 Middle East summit with Israel's President Benjamin Netanyahu, Palestinian Authority President Yasir Arafat, and Jordan's King Hussein, nothing has changed. The reactionary Netanyahu continues to view his razor-thin electoral victory in May as a green light to scuttle the Oslo peace agreements. On Oct. 28, U.S. negotiator Dennis Ross left the country, as did Arafat, without even an agreement on Hebron, the focus of intensive international diplomacy since Oct. 1.

Netanyahu says publicly that he'll implement the Oslo agreements by withdrawing from Hebron, a city of 100,000 Arabs and 450 fanatical Jewish settlers. All he wants are a few "adjustments." These, which he never details in public, include: 1) total control over the water supply; 2) "hot pursuit" of suspects into Palestinian-controlled areas of the city; 3) limiting Palestinian police to pistols; 4) keeping some large streets closed permanently to wall in the Arab population; and 5) joint Israeli-Arab patrols in Arab areas but Israeli-only patrols in Hebron's Jewish enclave.

For his part, Arafat continues to excel at hobnobbing with foreign heads of state. He is reluctant to allow the Palestinian masses to mobilize and he also continues to use words such as "jihad" which drive away even Israelis committed to the peace process. In addition, Arafat suppresses all dissenting Arab voices within his area of control.

Labor unrest continues in Western Europe

continuing government austerity shut down many schools, colleges, trains, and post offices on Oct. 17.

The strike was strongest outside Paris, however, in cities such as Marseilles, Caen, Rennes, and Strasbourg. In Marseilles, 40,000 took to the streets. To the surprise of both press and politicians, the French public remains solidly pro-labor, with 64% in an opinion poll saying they supported the strikers. Unlike in Germany, the French strikes have been limited to the public sector.

In Spain, a massive strike involving two million public sector workers took place on Oct. 15, after the newly



Mercedes-Benz workers in Stuttgart demonstrate against company cuts in sick pay.

Nicaragua elections

The right-wing Liberal Alliance delivered a heavy electoral defeat to the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in Nicaragua's October national elections. The president elect, Arnaldo Aleman, won with 48% of the vote. He defeated former president and Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega who got 38%.

Many within the FSLN are blaming Ortega for their stunning defeat. Ortega campaigned as a post-socialist non-revolutionary, promising respect for free market capitalism and foreign investment, and making friendly overtures to the U.S. government, which under Ronald Reagan had inflicted years of war, economic ruin and death by backing the contras against the Sandinista government. Referring to the worldwide collapse of state-capitalist Communism in 1989, a year before the Sandinistas were voted out of office, Ortega stated that "the international reality has changed and the Sandinista Front has changed with it."

The reality for Nicaraguans is grinding poverty. Nicaragua is rated as the second poorest economy in the hemisphere. Aleman was able to sell free market capitalism as the way to bring jobs to people suffering from over 50% joblessness and underemployment. He triumphed despite his ties to the Somoza family and his leading position among Nicaragua's capitalist elite. (Aleman is a lawyer and coffee plantation grower.) For the moment, the right has won, and the left has suffered from past and present failures to present a convincing alternative.

elected conservative government announced plans to freeze salaries. Massive demonstrations filled the streets of most cities. In Britain, public sector workers engaged in some determined strikes during the summer.

In France, Germany, and elsewhere in Europe, the governments which are today attacking labor have often gained public support by their scapegoating of immigrants on the issues of crime and the economy.

In Austria, on Oct. 14, the fascist-tinged Freedom Party scored a shocking 28% of the vote in European Parliament elections, just behind the Social Democrats and ahead of the traditional conservative party. France's neo-fascist National Front has also gained recently, while racist skinhead attacks have occurred in Germany.

While most labor unions in Western Europe have given some support to the anti-racist movement, that support has too often been of a token nature, like the struggle in Paris this year to support a group of Africans on hunger strike. This has helped racism to fester even among union members, something which has aided the rise of conservative, anti-labor governments. This reluctance to become deeply involved in the anti-racist struggle has also deprived the labor movement of the revolutionary energy of immigrants and anti-racist activists.

Lebed's firing in Russia

President Boris Yeltsin's long-awaited dismissal of his security adviser, General Aleksandr Lebed, only served to deepen the crises tearing at post-Communist Russia. Lebed's growing popularity was due in part to his militarist and nationalist posturing, but most of all to his having negotiated an end to the war in Chechnya. That reactionary war has taken up to 80,000 lives, leaving 240,000 people wounded.

On the one hand, the war revealed the determination of the Chechen people to be free of Russian domination and, on the other, the near collapse of what had been the world's second most powerful military machine. Seldom paid, often unfed and without gloves or even boots, the Russian draftees basically refused to fight any longer in this unpopular war, allowing tiny Chechnya to emerge from the conflict battered but victorious.

Since his firing, Lebed's popularity seems to have grown further, given the absence of any truly left or even bourgeois liberal alternative to Yeltsin's corrupt and increasingly authoritarian regime. Besides the Bonapartist Lebed, the only other sizable anti-Yeltsin force is that of Gennadi Zyuganov's Stalinist Communist Party.

The possibility of a different direction for Russia was indicated by the one-day strike of hundreds of thousands of teachers, miners, and other workers on Nov. 5, in a protest over unpaid wages. Whether this will coalesce into a rank-and-file labor movement independent of all the major political tendencies remains to be seen.

Zaire on brink of collapse

What may well be the biggest crisis of post-independence Africa is brewing in Zaire. The three-sided war that has intensified in eastern Zaire over the last two months has precipitated a refugee crisis among 1.4 million displaced Rwandan Hutu that threatens to be as great a humanitarian catastrophe as the one the world witnessed in 1994. Then, thousands of Hutu refugees in massive camps around the Zairian town of Goma perished from disease and hunger. More than 1 million Hutu fled Rwanda in 1994 after the genocide of 800,000 Tutsi and anti-government Hutu by the Hutu army and civilian militias led to the ouster of Rwanda's Hutu government by the Tutsi-led RDF (Rwandan Patriotic Front).

The refugee camps around Goma have been both a safe haven for 250,000 Hutu who participated in the 1994 Rwanda genocide and a staging ground for Hutu guerrilla incursions into Rwanda. Before they pulled out in October, the UN and humanitarian agencies had provided food, lodging and medical assistance to the camps and the *genocidaires* at the cost of \$1 million a day.

A new war broke out when Zaire's military tried to ethnically cleanse Zairian Tutsi called Banyamulenge from the plateaus above Lake Tanganyika, at the end of October. The Zairian army was repulsed, and has since suffered humiliating defeats at the hands of the Banyamulenge rebel group, the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire. With the rebels taking control of Goma, Hutu refugees have once again fled westward into more inhospitable regions of Zaire.

Aid agencies have pulled out, leaving the refugees with a week's rations and little in the way of drinkable water. In the meantime, the Zairian government is unraveling even as it accuses the RDF and the Tutsi-led government of neighboring Burundi of backing the Zairian Tutsi rebels. Though the latter deny the charges, the Zairian Tutsi take over of Goma has effectively dispersed the Hutu militias on Rwanda's border.

Despite threats of war from Zaire's ailing dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko, the more far-reaching consequence of the present crisis is that deeply divided, mineral-rich, underdeveloped Zaire, in the heart of Africa, is on the verge of completely coming apart. After weathering a massive democracy movement in 1992, and autonomy movements in the southern provinces of diamond-rich East Kasai and mineral-rich Shaba, this latest movement by the Banyamulenge could become the final impetus leading to the collapse of Zaire.

It is this prospect that motivates the narrow interests of the U.S. and France to find a solution to the refugee and political crises in Zaire.

—Lou Turner

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form, as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding in 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1968), *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as American Civilization on Trial concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.